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LETTERS ON

Different Subjects,

In FOUR VOLUMES;

Amongst which are interspers'd the

ADVENTURES

OF

ALPHONSO

After the Destruction of *Lisbon*.

By the AUTHOR of *The unfortunate Mother's
Advice to her absent Daughters*.

VOL. IV.

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M.DCC.LXVII.



LETTER I.

To Miss LOUISA.

BE assured, my dear Louisa, that I can never find any Thing troublesome to me that has the remotest chance of being serviceable to you, and do not again repeat those unfriendly apologies which begin your last letter: 'Tis the part of wisdom to be prepared for all events by maturely considering what may happen, to fix on a plan of conduct previous to the necessity of putting it in practice; the degrees of probability should here be al-

lowed their due weight, and as these are certainly on our side in the point in question, we will resume our subject.

WHAT I have said with regard to the method of making very young children perfectly cleanly, which is a fact I know to be undeniably true, proves, beyond a doubt, that they are capable of understanding signs much earlier than it is generally supposed ; and by *these* they may very soon be taught to know your meaning. The tempers of children are frequently spoiled by the mistaken opinion that they are hardly intelligent creatures the first six months, for the indulgence then given them fixes an obstinacy that is afterwards with great

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difficulty, if ever, conquered. From the moment of their birth they should be treated as rational creatures, that is, with an eye to their becoming so; when awake they should be kept in action, and continually talked to; these not only preserve the health of their bodies, but bring forward their intellectual faculties amazingly.

Of the person who has the care of a child no other business should ever be expected, the time *that* would naturally sleep (and more sleep than nature requires will always be found injurious) is but barely sufficient for her necessary refreshment, if she properly discharges her office. I write not for those whose poverty obliges them to labour for the necessaries of life;

such are to be commended for setting one child to rock another to rest, as long as it can be kept quiet, that their own hands may be more at liberty to provide for the maintenance of them all, and such a degree of care as will keep their bodies clean, and healthy, is all that ought to be expected from them, the formation of the mind being quite out of their sphere. This you will think the principal thing to be attended to, and *that* ought to commence as early as their receiving nourishment ; by this I mean, that every thing should be done for them in a manner the least burthensome to themselves, and the wants of nature so attentively supplied, as to give them no just cause of uneasiness ; for the fretfulness arising from neglect, and mis-

mismanagement is the first step toward souring the temper. Strange and absurd as this assertion perhaps may be thought, your own observation, will, I dare say, hereafter convince you of its truth.

Let us take a view of the unnatural manner in which infants are generally treated, and the variety of needless torments they are made to undergo. The scene often commences by throwing at once the full blaze of day on their half-opened eyes, or, if they make their first appearance in the night, ignorance and curiosity give them equal torment, by the help of a candle held to their faces, the extreme anguish of the aching sight produces a cry of distress, which gains

them the wished relief of obscurity, till the next curious person renews the torture. This scene perhaps may be repeated ten times in the first hour of a child's life, with exactly the same effects. When the painful operation of dressing commences, the covering is thoughtlessly at once taken from the child's face, a violent cry is immediately the consequence, and often continued, by a succession of disagreeable sensations, for two hours, exclusive of a little intermission of rocking, when probably the loud discord of the nurse's voice, ignorantly exerted to quiet the suffering babe's complaint, might give as much pain to the tender auditory nerve, unaccustomed to the vibration of sounds, as the unusual glare of light had before imparted

ed to the optic nerve ; add to this the variety of uneasy postures the infant must be placed in, to get on, and come at to fasten a multiplicity of separate garments, with the ridiculous custom of giving a spoonful of a most nauseous mixture the first thing to be swallowed, and it will amount to an evident proof that we have contrived to employ the first three or four hours of a child's life in giving successive torment to every sense ; by light, noise, medicine, and uneasy positions.

When after all this pain and trouble, the poor creature is what they call drest, the unnatural confinement of his limbs, fixed as in a pillory, is a continual punishment, to which he can never submit with ease, tho'

it may in time be rendered by custom more familiar: of this there needs no other proof than the visible and extreme pleasure that all children discover when stript of their incumbrances, the content and satisfaction with which they stretch themselves, enjoying the freedom of voluntary motion, and the uneasiness and dislike, if not fretfulness, always conspicuous the moment the restraint begins to be renewed, by putting on their shackles.

I am convinced beyond a doubt that to these and other instances of our own mismanagement is wholly owing that continual crying of infants, which, from being so customary, is erroneously supposed natural to them:

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was the pain of body inflicted at the time by this mismanagement, the only ill consequence resulting from it, that alone every feeling heart would wish to alleviate ; yet this is but a trifling consideration compared to the more injurious and often irreparable effects produced by the ill impression thus early made on the mind. Pevishness is the first lesson taught by the repeated infliction of corporeal pain, and the frequent neglect of a proper attention to all the wants of nature, or an opposition to them arising from ignorance or laziness : obstinacy is the offspring of successful pevishness ; that confirmed by indulgence, during the two first years, takes too deep root to be eradicated without the utmost difficulty, and the temper is often ruined by

by the fruitless attempt. Innumerable are the mischief that flow from this wrong method of setting forward, by which infants are presently ascertained that crying and fretfulness will tease the persons about them into a compliance with their desires; I have seen children not six months old conscious of this power, and capable of exerting it with amazing tyranny, to the obtaining every humour-some inclination; the consequences of which are sufficiently obvious.

Were these absurd customs exchanged for a more rational method of proceeding, the advantages would be inconceivably great. A few plain rules might be established so equally

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suitable to every individual of the species in this first period of existence, as not to admit the possibility of their being misapplied ; the first of these is, that the unavoidable change of customs, which must necessarily take place upon the entrance into a new world, should be introduced so gradually as to be scarcely perceptible, that repeated painful sensations produced by them may not give an early turn to fretfulness. After the first office is performed to the young stranger (during which great care should be taken to keep all light from the eyes) he should be suffered to lay quietly at least half an hour in the nurse's lap, wraped in a warm flannel, and longer if disposed to rest, before he is put to

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the trouble of dressing ; light should then be let in by very slow degrees, and not more fully than is absolutely necessary for the purpose of dressing ; the operation need not take up five minutes if the cloaths are contrived in the manner already described ; and if they are made to fit easy, you will find the child bear it contentedly without any sort of complaint.

To avoid giving any needless cause of uneasiness being the chief point to be regarded, a careful attention shou'd be paid to every natural want, that they may always be supply'd before they produce any painful sensation. All children will discover their desire of food by motions that plainly shew them to be searching for something ;

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these motions will be continued a considerable time without any cry, which is only the consequence of repeated disappointments in this search; such signs from them should always be waited for, carefully observed, and immediately answered; the offer of food when not wanted, being to the full as teasing to infants as the delay of it when required. If fed by hand it should be out of a vessel that will hold as much as they can take at once, nothing being more unnatural and tormenting, than the feeding them with a spoon that must be taken every minute from their mouths to be replenish'd. I have often thought that a round flexible pipe might be contrived, for the feeding dry-nursed children, full of small holes at the

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end, within which pipe a piece of sponge might be placed, to stop the liquor from flowing out, unless press'd or drawn by suction, and this pipe screw'd to a spout on the vessel which contains the liquor ; something of this kind would come much nearer to the method in which they receive the milk from the breast, and such a pipe might remain in their mouths till they drop asleep, or took their heads from it, but whether an instrument of this sort could be made to answer, I know not.

With regard to sleep, nature alone ought here to dictate, nor shou'd a nurse ever be suffer'd to lull a child to rest by rocking him in a cradle, which

they are too apt to do, and then leave him 'till repeated cries force them to resume the troublesome office of attendance: an infant, who is continually play'd with, and talked to while awake, will insensibly drop asleep in the nurse's lap, she may then lay him down and rest herself, but must carefully watch the moment of his waking, and take him up before there is time for any complaint, that the desired change of posture may not be procured by a cry of impatience: within a few weeks not half the sleep will be required which was at first necessary; 'twill not be found difficult in a short time so to divert a child by constant attention, as to keep him awake most part of the day; the sooner this can be made habitual the better, because

cause he will then sleep quietly almost all the night, which is more beneficial to the child, and much less fatiguing to the nurse.

Children thus managed, whose natural wants are always observed and properly supply'd, will never cry unless from some accidental illness ; and then not violently but rather in a mournful tone ; at such times no particular efforts should be used to quiet them ; no lamentations express'd by a change of voice in those about them, but exactly the same method pursued of varying their posture, observing only to move them gently, because the little complaints they are incident to, are of a sort that may sometimes be increased by those quick motions, which

which are a proper and useful exercise to them when well ; if you can discover one posture to be more easy than another that may be continued, playing with and talking to them as usual, without shewing the least appearance of pity, which in all cases is extremely injurious. The pain occasioned by cutting of teeth would, I believe, be much less severe, if the use of the coral was banish'd, because rubbing the gums tends only to harden them, and must consequently make the passage of the teeth more difficult.

Though every natural want ought to be instantly relieved, those of fancy and humour should never, on any occasion, be indulged; a rattle should be given them as early as they are

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able to divert themselves with it, and other little toys soon added, for variety is necessary to the amusement; these play things should be often changed by the nurse, for when the novelty wears off the entertainment ceases; but the humoursome inclination, which makes children reach eagerly after every thing they see, must never be comply'd with; on the contrary, whenever they stretch out their hands *impatiently* after any thing, though one of their own toys it should be refused them with a grave steady face, accompanied by the plain words, no, you must not have it yet; the meaning of this they will very soon so thoroughly comprehend, as to be immediately contented on receiving such an answer, even long before they are

are supposed to understand language ; from the first they should, on every occasion, be spoken to in this plain distinct manner, but never in a loud or shrill voice, by which means they will know every thing you say, whilst incapable of forming any articulate sound themselves.

I have seen children thus managed, always quiet, good humour'd, obedient, and as intelligent at four months old, as they usually are at a year and a quarter ; and am certain that it will be found the surest means of either cherishing a good natural disposition, or correcting a bad one, and will lay the best foundation to be afterwards work'd upon.

These, my dear Louisa, are all the invariable rules I can recollect that are equally suitable to every child, and may be put in practice to all infants, not only without any possibility of injury, but with an absolute certainty of being serviceable. When their natural propensities, predispositions, or inherent turn of temper can be discover'd, by these, the treatment of them must be solely regulated; and as they are hardly ever found to be exactly the same in any two instances, there is no possibility of forming a system that can be of general use. It is then the part of every sensible and prudent mother to regard attentively the different tendencies of her children, so as to be able to form her plan of education suitable to each.

To

To one, emulation is useful; to another, the suppression of it absolutely necessary: some dispositions require constant encouragement as a spur to action; others, a continual check upon their activity; with one gentle, and alluring methods will succeed best; with another severity and threats. These can only be regulated by such a close observation as will prove the utility of either method to each individual; and where a mother discharges this important office properly (which for the first six years belongs wholly to her) I believe one may venture to say the children will generally turn out well; for to ignorance, or neglect in this early period, I am convinced, is owing almost all the capital

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errors in the conduct of succeeding life.

I know not whether one other general rule might not be added, viz. That beating can never be of service to any disposition. I will not positively assert this as an uncontrovertible truth, though it is my own opinion founded on observation, having never yet, in any instance, seen it attended with good effects, but in many with very pernicious ones, and believe it will generally be found that mild tempers are irreparably dejected, and sprightly ones hardened into unconquerable obstinacy by it, not to mention the cruelty which is alone a sufficient objection, if its necessity or use be doubtful.

When

When you become a mother if you will put the method here proposed in practise, I will venture to answer for its success ; the greatest difficulty is to find a nurse that will punctually obey the directions given when out of your sight, and this is a point of the utmost consequence, as on a perfect steadiness and exact equality of behaviour depend all the advantages accruing from the method.

Whatever may be your own inclination, such is your situation in life, and such the customs of the world you must live in, that it will not be in your power to have your children always with you ; should you suckle them, they will be brought to you only at stated times, and left at others to the care of a servant ; the main

point to be regarded in the choice of such a servant is that sort of fidelity, which may be depended on to pay a strict obedience to all your orders, without ever substituting her own opinion in the room of the directions given, which, most of them are too apt to do ; this is a matter of so much consequence that it will be necessary to keep a close watch over her 'till you are certain she may be safely trusted.

All the parts of your duty, my dear Louisa, have been hitherto so well discharged, that I have not the least doubt of the propriety of your conduct in every new relation ; and shall rejoice to see you set as laudable an example in the characters of a wife, and a mother, as you have already done in those of a daughter and a friend—

friend— that all the happiness these
new relations can bestow may be your
portion, is the ardent wish of

Your

most affectionate, &c.

The

The ADVENTURES OF ALPHONSO,
continued.

ALarmed at the absence of my protector, where are you, cried I, my kind deliverer? Ah! do not leave me. Behold me near as you wish, replied he, and know me as myself, stript of the borrowed form in which I have been conversing with you. He spoke not now as before articulately, nor heard I any voice or sound, but felt and knew his operation on my mind, and at once perceived my guardian in all his native splendor stand confessed. Here all description fails! nor can I, my dear brother, make you understand in what

what manner (form I cannot call it) he appeared to me. As spirit is invisible to the eye of man, so is all definition of it incomprehensible to his understanding; I can only tell you, that there was a continual variation in his appearance, which remained not a minute the same. Sometimes expanded, he seemed so to mix with the celestial æther that surrounded us, as scarce to be distinguished from it; then instantly contracting, seemed not to occupy a point.—But 'tis in vain to attempt any description of what I know it impossible for me to convey to you an idea of; it must suffice only to say that I observed matter was no obstruction to his passage, whose essence was of so subtile a nature as instantly to pervade the most solid body

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however close the texture or adhesion of its parts.

'Tis impossible also to make you comprehend in what manner we, after this, conversed. Language was now become as useless to me as it was to him, each instantaneously conceived those sentiments the other meant to convey, much more copiously than words could have expressed. This method of communicating ideas being incomprehensible to mortals, I am at some loss how to give you the subsequent relation ; to make myself intelligible I must have recourse to our usual methods of expression, tho' by this means many circumstances that evade the power of language will be lost.

Now

Now free'd from all the incumbrance of mortality, I found no difficulty in obeying the orders of my guide to accompany him. We ascended in a moment through the chasm, and suspending ourselves in air, overlooked the town, and adjacent fields, that were crowded with its late inhabitants.

The changes your body has undergone, said my conductor, are of a kind to answer all the purposes intended, but not such as to render your form invisible to men, or yourself proof against injuries; to obviate the former a mist surrounds you that appears like a cloud to your fellow mortals; and to prevent the latter, you must not descend within the reach of

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any solid body, through which, tho' your sight is permitted to penetrate, you cannot pass like me: this change was not necessary to the information you are to receive, and none of our great Creator's operations are superfluous.—Observe my instructions, and regard attentively the scene before you.—The thoughts of men are open to your inspection, and the assistance they receive from us made visible to you.

Guess at my astonishment when turning my eyes on the earth I beheld a much greater number of beings like my attendant, than of men; I instantly concluded this was occasioned by the late dreadful calamity, which had induced them to descend for

for the relief and assistance of the distressed. My companion observing my mistake, and the confusion which the multiplicity of objects occasioned, informed me that an equal number of these beings were always occupied amongst us; and directed my attention to particular instances.—Behold, said he, those two men for whom you have hitherto entertained the highest veneration, and whose austere lives you have so often admired; examine their hearts when stript of that disguise which conceals them from the public view; they are now consulting in what manner the general distress may be turned most to their own advantage.

I perceived in a retired part of a certain monastry, the superior of an order I had always held in the highest esteem, engaged in earnest conversation with an inferior brother ; several beings, to them invisible, attending, but not of the benevolent class with my companion ; on their countenances sat brooding envy, lowering discontent, and black infernal malice, with all her horrid train of mischievous designs, which spoke them of that malevolent order who delight in the misery of mankind, and to whom the incorrigible only are left a prey. The subject in debate was the method of increasing the terror of the unfortunate sufferers with a view of raising larger contributions from their credulity.— The means resolved on I forbear to mention

mention out of respect to those who have been deluded by such artifices. My astonishment was beyond expression to behold the contempt with which they in private treated every ceremony that they publickly preached the indespensible duty of observing, and the despicable light in which they beheld those who were imposed on by their apparent sanctity ; but I was yet more shocked by discovering that they regarded all religion as a political farce, and the profession of it merely as a trade.

Observe, said my conductor, the principal of this society, whom you have hitherto mistaken for the most holy of men, examine well his heart.—It is, said I, the receptacle of every

vice that dishonours human nature?—true replied he, I will shew you the retrospect of his life, where you may trace the steps by which he has arrived to the present pitch of uncommon wickedness. He then presented to me a mirrour of a globular form, on which, as it turned, I saw distinctly pictured all his past actions, and in a moment was made acquainted with every incident as they had regularly occured.—It would fill a volume to inform you of the particulars, shall therefore only give you a general sketch of his history.

He was a native of a neighbouring kingdom, the son of a Burgeois, who at the age of sixteen put him clerk to an oppulent merchant; by a well di-
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sembled honesty he obtained his master's entire confidence, and made use of that advantage to defraud him in every possible instance ; being once on the point of a palpable detection, from his inability to answer a draught for a sum much inferior to what he ought to have had in his possession, he, by means of false keys, concealed a considerable sum of money, and some jewels of great value in the apartment of his fellow clerk, informed his master of the pretended loss ; a search was made, and the effects were found in the possession of the young man, who, vainly protesting his innocence, suffered the sentence of the law : Not the least suspicion fell on the contriver, whose honesty remained unimpeached, and who for some time securely continued

his former practices; but growing fearful of a discovery, took the first opportunity of his having received a very large sum, with which he absconded. His father, from a principle of honesty, made up the loss to his master, by which his circumstances were greatly embarrassed; and he soon after died of the grief occasioned by the scandalous behaviour of his son, who was got safe to England, where he heard this fatal catastrophe without the least compunction. He was entered into trade for himself under a borrowed name, dealt in jewels, understood the business, and might have grown rich, had not the extravagant expence of his secret vices (for he ever wore the mask of peity) far exceeded his profits.

Under

Under the fair semblance of strict virtue and probity, he contracted an intimate acquaintance with a gentleman of fortune; whom, when his affairs grew desperate, and his credit every moment in danger, he drew in to share with him in the purchase of some jewels, on pretence of not having a sufficient sum to lay down, and positively refusing to accept the assistance that was readily offered, unless the gentleman would consent to partake the profits; at length prevailed, and on these conditions received two thousand pounds:—Articles of agreement were proposed, these the lender, who meant only to serve him and wanted not to make any advantage, objected to, the other insisted on it, pretending thereby to secure his friend

in case of mortality, who, confiding in his probity, left the matter entirely to him, by which he had an opportunity of getting the articles so worded as to engage him in a general partnership. This point settled, he immediately disappeared, leaving only his debts behind ; these came upon his friend, who in vain pleaded his having no other engagement but in the late purchase.—The articles were produced, and his estate seized for the benefit of his creditors, by which himself, a wife, and two children, were reduced to a state of beggary.

In the first transports of despair the unfortunate gentleman was with difficulty restrained from laying violent hands on himself, to restore to his
destitute

destitute family an entailed estate. He pursued the villain from kingdom to kingdom, who had art enough to evade the search, and at last took refuge in Lisbon under the disguise of a religious habit, where an invariable hypocrisy procured him the character of superior sanctity, and had been made a cloak to every kind of villainy. I saw with horror the arts by which he had here extorted vast sums from the deluded people, and the uncommon vices on which they had been lavished, nor could have believed it possible for human nature to arrive at the pitch of unfeeling cruelty, with which he had contrived, and effected the death of a good man, his wife, and daughter at the last Auto de Fe, out of revenge to the latter, for having refused to

comply with the infamous attempts he had made on her virtue, and this had been so artfully managed that he was not suspected to have any hand in it, the particulars are so shocking to a virtuous mind, that I will spare you the relation, and hasten from the disagreeable subject.

In the same manner was presented to me the history of the Friar he was then consulting, who became his only confidant from a similarity of conduct and disposition, which rendered the heart of the one the exact counterpart of the other. I observed throughout this conversation, in which a most villainous plan was concerted, that the invisible beings offered not a thought to either ; and enquired for what purpose

pose they attended. My guide informed me, that when men had arrived to such a pitch of wickedness as to be forsaken by every good being, vice was the voluntary choice of their own depraved inclinations; and that these malignant spirits, who after that period constantly attended them, were never permitted to assist in the formation of any diabolical design, but only to aid in the execution; and that even here they were under such restrictions that their power extended not either to injure or terrify the virtuous.

Their conversation was interrupted by a visit from the good Rodolphus, attended by the guardian of his safety, at whose presence the malignant spirits that had surrounded those brothers of iniquity

iniquity instantly abashed retired to an awful distance. The two fathers were for a moment disconcerted at the sight of a man whose known virtue they both feared and hated; but presently recovering, received him with the most friendly caresses, and talked of the late calamity in that strain of piety they knew to be most acceptable to him. Here the malignant spirits that had been idle spectators, again advancing to their post, exerted their influence, and presented to the minds of each a set of such well chosen terms, that no human penetration could have suspected for hypocrisy.

LETTER II.

To Mrs. G—

Dear Madam,

THE intermission of the last post was occasioned by the continuance of the pain in my head, which lasted very violently 'till yesterday, am now much better, and seize the first opportunity to go on with a story that your growing friendship has interested you so much in.

My friend's apparent contentment under the restraint on her diversions, tended greatly to remove the apprehensions that had been instilled into her

her Father ; and she found it no difficult matter to obtain his permission to walk out for her health, and soon after to visit her acquaintance ; these walks were always taken in a place where much company met, which answer'd to her all the purposes of going to public assemblies. Having determined to dispose of her hand immediately, she sought only for a person in whom she might reasonably hope to find an agreeable companion : The resolution to take a step of so much moment upon the strength of her own judgment, and unknown to her father, was in itself so very imprudent and unjustifiable, that it is hardly allowable to say any thing in commendation of the plan laid down for the prosecution of it ; yet, were it possible to separate them

them from each other, the latter was more judicious than could have been expected at her age, and would merit some praise. Fortune, and Person were disregarded as things of no material consequence ; the qualifications she laid down as essential were a tolerable understanding, a great share of good nature, an honest disposition, and of a good family : To find a person in whom these were united was now the point in view : She saw them not in any of those who then paid their addresses to her, and therefore immediately dismiss'd them all. Coquetry was now entirely laid aside ; and the serious design of marriage being formed, no man was allow'd to follow her whom she thought improper to be her husband.

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The notice she had taken of the Captain above-mentioned, had made him pretty constant in his attendance, but as he had never made love to her, there was no pretence for dismissing him; and, after the promise made her Father, she dreaded being seen with him least that should occasion a farther restraint on her liberty.—A sudden thought occured as a means to get quit of him at once, and without a moment's consideration was pursued.—This was to write an acrostic in terms so disadvantageous to his character as could not fail of affronting him, so far at least as to prevent his speaking to her again. The end was effectually answered—he spoke no more to, but said every ill-natured thing of her, to which she paid no regard,

regard, and was happy in the thought of having on any terms, got entirely quit of a person, the continuance of whose apparent intimacy might have render'd her design impracticable.

While this affair was the general subject of conversation (tho' never mentioned to her but in praise of her poetry which in fact had no merit) she accidentally met M. P— walking with some ladies of her most intimate acquaintance, whom she joined ; he was a perfect stranger to her, and had nothing either in his person or manner so attractive as to draw her observation : He was just come from the university, had not yet finished his studies, was in high spirits, and seemed much disposed to what might be called a boyish

ish kind of rattle. When they met next, he had a graver appearance, address'd himself chiefly to her ; talk'd very seriously and sensibly on the irrational manner in which the generality of young people idled away their time in that period of life which ought to be wholly devoted to improvement, and wish'd himself again at the university, as he found it next to impossible to apply to study, while every body about him was in a continual state of dissipation. She was much pleased with this conversation which lasted more than an hour ; when she parted from the company he followed her, and, after apologizing for the question, asked if she had written the acrostic on Capt. — which was imputed to her — being answered

answered in the affirmative, he replied, with an air of concern, that he was extremely sorry for it, as he hoped to have been able to contradict a report so much to her disadvantage; and after a short pause, as if to consider whether it was best to proceed or not, said, that he could not dispense with himself from telling her what was the general opinion concerning it, which perhaps no person had yet been friendly enough to do; represented with warmth, and earnestness, the extreme imprudence of a young lady's laying herself open to such ill-natured censures, and express'd the utmost surprize that a person, of whose good understanding he politely pretended to be sufficiently convinced, by the short conversation of that

morning, should be capable of so indiscreet an action.—Nothing could be more reasonable than the arguments he alledged to prove the impropriety of her conduct in this instance, or more ingratiating than his manner of asking pardon for a freedom which he said proceeded wholly from a sincere esteem for her peculiar merit, and an earnest desire that she might never again act in a manner so very inconsistent with her own judgment, which if consulted, would always be sufficient to direct her.

‘Twas not possible for this Gentleman to have taken a more effectual method of prepossessing her in his favour. She felt the truth of all he had urged in condemnation of so wrong

wrong a step; had seen it herself in the same light, but had not heard what the world said of it, and was much pleased with the freedom and openness with which he related the censures that were pass'd on this affair; she acknowledged her obligation for the friendly information; told him that being for many reasons very desirous to get immediately quit of the Captain's acquaintance she had taken that method, as the first that occurred, to effect it at once; without giving due weight to the objections. He then blamed her for having ever contracted so improper an acquaintance, but much more for so indiscreet a method of breaking it off; said, that no person would be more perfect if she took time to consider of her ac-

tions, but he believed her too apt to form hasty resolutions, and with a peculiar earnestness begged her to promise him never again to write to any Man whom she did not intend to make her husband. This request was readily granted, and they parted apparently very well pleased with each other.

When my young friend came to reflect on the subject, and manner of this conversation, she very naturally concluded that Mr. P—— was not perfectly indifferent towards her. She was very sensible of the justness of his remarks, was surprized at the good judgment discover'd in them; and, far from being displeased at the freedom with which he had censured her conduct, was,

was, by that circumstance, greatly prejudiced in his favour ; as it appeared to proceed from a perfectly open, and honest disposition ; she made no doubt of his being in some degree already attached to her, or of the increase of that attachment if she gave any encouragement to it ; this she resolved to evade till a farther acquaintance with him might enable her to form a more certain judgment of his disposition, and general sentiments.

As she had now laid aside the desire of universal admiration and was seriously resolved to become a wife, she examined her own heart with regard to him, and tho' his Person was not then very agreeable, found no objection arise on that account ; as yet

she knew only his name and was acquainted with his family ; but finding that unexceptionable, determined to examine most carefully into his principles, understanding, and temper ; and in case either of these were disapproved, to continue only a distant civility which he had a right to claim from his late behaviour. He sought all opportunities of being with her, she never avoided them, and always turned the conversation on subjects that naturally led to the discoveries she wished to make.

Whether at this time, as he was then very young, his disposition was really good, his morals uncorrupted, and he spoke the honest dictates of his

heart,

heart, which it must be owned the openness of his manner gave all the reason in the world to believe ; or, that seeing through her design, he took the most certain method to effect his own, by keeping so constant a guard over himself as to appear possessed of all those good qualities which alone could have engaged her affections, and by an artifice, superior to her penetration, deceived her into a false opinion, I will not pretend to determine, and am yet doubtful whether his subsequent ill conduct, might not in great measure have proceeded from his becoming too early the master of his own actions :— Be that as it may :—The sentiments he then expressed on every subject, were so consonant to her own, that

from an apparent similarity of disposition, she became seriously attached to him. Love and marriage were sometimes the subjects of conversation, the qualifications which alone could justly authorise the former, and the duties annexed to the latter were discuss'd as general topicks, without any particular application or apparent design. On these occasions he often threw out Hints of the great difficulty a Man of delicacy must labour under, in addressing a woman of superior fortune, to prove the sincerity of his affection for her, and escape the being censured for views of a mercenary kind, which, perhaps, his Heart was incapable of entertaining ; and, for this reason, urged the equality of fortune as in great measure necessary to establish

establish that opinion of sincerity, of either side, on which the foundation of future happiness must be built. These assertions were accompanied with a manner that could leave no room to doubt of the meaning intended to be conveyed ; and so extremely natural was the following embarrassment, that a penetration much superior to what Miss M—'s, at that age, could possibly be, would have been deceived by it. While any doubt remained of his disposition, temper, or sentiments in any essential point, she said nothing on this subject that might encourage a farther explanation ; but was no sooner satisfied with regard to these, than she took the first opportunity of declaring her dissent from his opinion in this particular,

particular, and asserted, that tho' fortune as the means of procuring the conveniencies and comforts of life, ought always to be considered as a necessary ingredient in the composition of happiness, which could not subsist without such a portion of it as would be needful for this purpose, yet there was no sort of necessity for an equal distribution of it, to prove the sincerity of a mutual attachment; but if a sufficiency was found on either, which side it happened accidentally to be of, was a point of no consequence. Mr. P— instantly laid hold on a declaration, that had perhaps been long impatiently expected, and assured her that this inequality of fortune was the sole reason of his not having hitherto dared to say that his whole happiness de-

depended on her, and even yet was fearful that she might suspect him of mercenary views, adding a thousand tender protestations of the most disinterested affection, which, he said, it should be the business of his life to prove the sincerity of, if in pursuance of the generous sentiments just expressed, she would accept his hand. She heard him without interruption; most attentively regarded every word and every look; and, unfortunately, thought herself certain of the truth and honesty of his heart: Satisfied with his conviction, she hesitated not to tell him that a thorough approbation of his principles and conduct, as far as she could form a judgment of them, had so prepossessed her in his favour,

favour, that she with pleasure accepted his offered hand.

The main point being settled to their mutual satisfaction, it remained only to concert a proper plan of putting their intention into execution, to this there arose innumerable obstacles; Mr. P—— had yet a year longer to stay at the university, and seemed afraid that his father would not consent to his marriage before that time was expired. Tho' my friend knew that her father would never force her inclinations so far as to oblige her to marry the man he intended for her, if she peremptorily refused her consent; yet she had very little hopes that he would relinquish his choice in fa-

your

avour of a person, who had hardly any fortune. A present declaration of their intentions appeared, therefore, on all hands, to threaten a final separation. To remain as they were, with mutual promises of fidelity 'till he quitted the university, was the most prudent plan, but to this her insupportable situation at home, and the expected arrival of a person designed for her husband, were unanswerable objections. Since her promise of marriage she had treated him with the most unreserved confidence, nor concealed a thought from him ; he knew all that passed in her own family, the reason of her never going to any public assembly, the vexation she had received from Prudentia ; foresaw the difficulty of putting off

off the match intended, the ill treatment she must expect for so doing, and the little probability of her being able to bear with it a year longer, yet dreaded a declaration that might possibly separate them forever. After much deliberation upon the matter, she proposed to him the being privately married immediately, on condition that the marriage should not be consummated till both their fathers were made acquainted with it. To this he at first objected, but at length consented to her own terms, and the next day informed her that all was prepared, and appointed the hour of meeting to perform the ceremony. She then demanded a positive promise upon his word and honour, not even to ask the right of a husband till after their marriage

marriage was made public ; he gave it most solemnly, and their hands were joined ; 'till then she had never seen him but in the public walks, or at the house of the young lady by whose means they became acquainted, and who was always in the room ; all their conversation had hitherto passed in the presence, tho' not within the hearing of other people ; this prudent precaution was now no longer thought necessary, and he easily obtained her consent to see her at home alone, as less liable to observation, for their being seen continually together began now to be generally talked of. They met frequently in this manner, and sometimes sat up together 'till two or three in the morning ; during these visits I must do him the justice to ac-

know-

knowledge that he never but once entreated to be absolved from the promise exacted. To this my friend replied, with great firmness, that nothing upon earth should induce her to break through a condition on which alone she would have secretly become his wife; and that the repetition of such a request on his part, would not only prevent her seeing him again alone, but also forfeit the good opinion she had entertained of him, the continuance of which he could not but see was now become in every sense necessary to his future happiness; she had so peculiar a steadiness in her manner, when she put on the air of command, that I never saw the man who did not seem awed by it. Mr. P—— seeing her too resolute to have any

any hope of prevailing, excused himself very politely ; and, to obtain her pardon, renewed the most solemn promise to abide faithfully by the conditions annexed to their marriage, 'till it should be proper to make that public : This he religiously kept, and during the time they remained together in the same place, which was about three weeks, never again mentioned the subject. She then went to pass the summer at a friend's house in the country, and he returned to the university.

From the slight sketch I have now given you of the first nineteen years of my friend's life, you will be enabled to form a just judgment of that singular character of which, tho' so

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many have given their opinion, not one in ten thousand has known. This was my sole aim in recounting many trifling incidents, that, taken in any other light, would be more tiresome than entertaining; but you will find a perfect knowledge of the temper, and uncommon turn of Miss M——, so absolutely necessary to understand the strange history of Mrs. P——, that if you have acquired this knowledge by what has been already said, it will make amends for the tedious road we have hitherto travelled together. A spacious field now opens before us, filled with a variety of adventures; and some, I believe, of the most extraordinary nature that ever happened in real life. On the review of them I am sometimes inclined to think the whole would appear too

romantic to gain credit with any person who had not, like you, an entire confidence in my veracity. To myself, who was many tedious years a painful witness of the facts, they now seem (to use the beautiful expression of the sacred writer) but as a tale that is told ; or like the horrid visions of a restless night, of which there remains only the remembrance, softened by the pleasing certainty that they are forever past. Yet even now, past as they are, I scarce forbear to shudder at the recollection of the uncommon ills so long sustained by a friend so truly dear to me. How immensely kind is that dispensation, which has thrown over future events, a veil impenetrable to human sight ? Could Mrs. P—— have foreseen the

train of misfortunes that were preparing for her, from the moment she assumed that fatal name, it must have been next to impossible for her to have preserved that degree of composure necessary to discharge the common duties of life; and much more probable that reason, affrighted at the horrid prospect, had taken at once a final leave, and left her mind a melancholy chaos.

Amongst the follies of mankind there is scarce any so unaccountable as the strong desire, that almost universally prevails, of foreseeing those events, which the entire ignorance of best secures our present happiness; half the felicity of to-day, I am convinced, is owing to the uncertainty of

of to-morrow. Where the change of circumstances is to be disadvantageous, the case is too plain to admit of dispute; but on the contrary supposition, the fact may be proved equally true. So very imperfect is the highest degree of happiness attainable here, that hope is absolutely necessary to render life supportable even in its best state; sufficient for that purpose, it may be said, is the well grounded hope of more perfect and permanent felicity beyond the grave, which a virtuous conduct will afford; and consequently, that supposing a man possessed of all he could wish for upon earth, he would receive a double satisfaction from the certainty of continuing exactly in the same state, to the end of his duration here: However plausible this ar-

ment may sound, observation and experience will prove its falacy.

To have nothing more to desire is, in other words, to lose the power of enjoying what we possess; some degree of uncertainty at the close of every evening what the ensuing day may produce, is in every state of life necessary to animate that sort of desire, which enlivens every pleasure; and, therefore, to set out in the world with a perfect knowledge of all that was to happen to ourselves in it, would be the greatest of all misfortunes, and the bane of all temporal felicity; every pleasing motive to action must cease, and the mind unavoidably sink into an indolence and inactivity that would soon take from it

it even the power of enjoyment. Not only hope, but even such a portion of fear, or rather apprehension, as must result from the bare possibility of a deprivation of the good we possess, is here necessary to keep alive that sense of every blessing which alone can enable us to set a just value upon it. Very rare are the instances of persons who have attained the summit of their wishes, but among those few, who have been what the world calls thus fortunate, did you ever meet with, or hear of one who did not find himself less happy after the possession, than in the pursuit of the point in view.— Needs there a stronger proof that hope, fear, and uncertainty, are ingredients without which the composition of human happiness can never be formed, yet

these are generally thought unsurmountable obstacles to it ; how weak and fallible is human judgment ! and how much more wisely has the author of nature contrived for us, than we should have done for ourselves, had the direction of events been left in our hands. Happy only is that man who is perfectly satisfied with all the dispensations of heaven, and regards himself as in the hands of a benevolent father, whose tender affection will forever lead him to what his unerring judgment knows to be best for his children. This principle once firmly established in the mind, puts it out of the power of temporal evils to make us wretched, and we may be secure of travelling on to our journey's end, however rough the road,

with

with ease and contentment: 'Tis this which has supported my friend thro' innumerable misfortunes that would else have long since sunk her to the grave, and she now receives the reward of an absolute resignation to the divine will, in the most perfect happiness that can be enjoyed upon earth, amidst the society of a few virtuous and sensible friends most tenderly beloved, and to whom she is equally dear.

Notwithstanding I have a perfect remembrance of Mrs. P——'s whole history, yet the little application that is necessary to methodise it with some sort of connection, joined to the unavoidable effects of dwelling continually on a very unpleasing train of thought

thought, has, I believe, increased
that nervous head-ach I have been
some years subject to. The good
doctor, whose judgment my own ex-
perience has so often authenticated,
has just been with me, he says, that
a total relaxation, if possible, from all
kind of thought is for some time so
necessary, that if I will not be pre-
vailed on to lay aside my pen and my
books, he must have them removed
by force of arms; to save him this
trouble I have promised a voluntary
compliance, and in pursuance of his
advice am to idle away a few weeks
at Scarborough; but will not set out
before I receive your answer, as I am
not without hopes that you may be
persuaded to accompany me; and
flatter myself, that to you, my dear
Edwards madam,

madam, I cannot urge a more powerful argument than the sincere assurance that nothing would so much contribute towards the perfect recovery of my health as the society of a friend so inestimably dear to

Your affectionate, &c.

L E T-

LETTER III.

To Mr. B——

Dear Sir,

IT was by mere accident, that I received your two last letters unopened, and I must begin this by chiding you for being so careless in the direction, notwithstanding I had told you that some others had met with a contrary fate by being carried to a person of the same name in my neighbourhood; neither is this all I have to find fault with you for; your late behaviour at — (so thoroughly inattentive to all the punctilio's that you ought *there* particularly to have remember'd which has this moment been told me) is yet more blameable.

Do

Do not wrap yourself up so much in philosophical contemplations, as to be above a necessary regard to the common occurrences and duties of life. There are but few young Men to whom such a caution would be necessary —I will acknowledge that you have chosen the better part, but let me add in the words of the same person on another occasion,—These things ought you to have done, and not left the other undone.

I am pleased with the account of the rational manner in which you pass your time—had a man nothing else to do in life but to improve his mind and please himself, such a situation would be by far the most eligible; but you know there are many other

other duties to be discharged, though these vary according to the different ranks and views of mankind, yet all have *some* that cannot be dispensed with, and which it ought to be their principal care to qualify themselves for the discharge of.

'Tis high time for you, my good friend, to quit retirement and books, and to bend your studies towards men and manners ; these are never to be known by report ; we must mix amongst men to acquire any useful knowledge of mankind. The more we see of the world, the more cause, perhaps, may we find to dislike it. Pride, passion, selfishness, envy, malice, and falsehood too generally prevail.—Fools are the dupes of knaves, honesty

honesty is made the prey of craft ; the good daily suffer from the designs of the bad ; the rich oppress the poor ; the poor revile the rich, and general discontent seems to reign amongst all ranks of men. Sincerity is become an empty name, and offers of friendship but unmeaning sounds, which custom and common consent have made it esteem'd a mark of ignorant innocence to place any confidence in.

Such is the world on whose public stage you are hastening ; how necessary therefore is a competent knowledge of it to guard against the surrounding evils that must be encounter'd. Books are here of but little use ; experience only can teach this intricate science, without

without which the best understanding, and the brightest genius will never make it's way to the esteem of more than the discerning few, who only can do justice to intrinsic merit.

Quit therefore your favorite studies, bid adieu to caves and cotages, to H——'s pleasing shades, and think no more of that retirement which now grows every day more prejudicial to you, The mind whose chief delight consists in the encrease of knowledge, and the enjoyment of a rational society, is too apt to confine itself within too narrow a sphere of action, and prefer the pleasing and improving conversation of a few valuable friends to all the hurry, and hypocrisy that must be encounter'd in

a public life, but this disposition indulged would in time rob the common wealth of all its most useful members. Those who are capable of being serviceable to the community are indispensably bound to mix in society with a view of being so ; the advantages which may thereby be reaped to their private fortune ought to be only the secondary consideration ; for when that unhappily becomes the first 'tis the bane of every noble and generous sentiment. Let it be your principal point to make a *good* figure in the world ; that can only be done by a proper discharge of all the private, domestic, and social duties of your station in it ; this will secure to you the esteem of the wise and virtuous, and you need not then fear ac-

quiring a deserved fortune, which, under proper restrictions, is a laudable endeavour in any young man who is not born to the possession of an estate.

You are much mistaken in believing that by what you call the *study* of history, you are encreasing your knowledge of men and manners; I know several persons who are perfectly acquainted with all the best Histories of every Kingdom in the known world, can tell you almost every memorable event in every reign, describe the views and designs of every king, and every minister that have made any great figure, and point out the supposed cause of almost every Revolution that has happen'd; yet these people

people are totally ignorant of the customs and manners of their own country; acquainted only with books, they know not how to mix in conversation, or to behave with propriety amongst men, are the objects of ridicule in every company, and the constant dupes of all who think it worth their while to impose upon them; ever mistaking appearances for realities, and wholly unaccustom'd to the reading mankind, seldom penetrate into the motives of actions, or the views and designs of the persons about them: — This is to be acquired only by the study of men, and such an accurate observation of the general tenor of their actions, as may enable us to investigate their different characters, and lead, almost with certainty,

through a thousand false appearances, to the true motives of their conduct toward ourselves—This knowledge you will soon find extremely necessary to you, and ought to lose no time in attaining it; the immense advantage you will reap from the acquisition will more than repay the trouble it may cost you.

With regard to the use that may be made of reading history, I will give you the sentiments of a gentleman, whose superior understanding and accurate judgment justly place him in the first class of human beings, by enclosing a letter he wrote many years ago on the subject; you will there see all that is to be expected from the knowledge of history, and the most proper method

method of reading it to advantage pointed out with that strength and perspicuity, which is the characteristic of every thing he writes: This will be more useful to you than a volume of my composing.

I thank you for the poetical part of your epistle * which is pretty. Your genius wants just that sort of cultivation you are giving to the spot described; the flowers in either lose half their beauty from being too much crowded, which produces a general confusion. The greatest difficulty you will find in forming elegant compositions will be that of confining your Imagination within proper bounds, and lopping off every shoot,

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* See Page 169 Third Volume.

that, however beautiful in itself, separately considered, tends only to obstruct the general beauty of the whole. You know you are never to expect flattery from me but will always have my real sentiments with that perfect freedom which becomes my professions of being,

My dear Sir,

Your sincere friend, &c.

On the reading of history by ——

AS I find that you are of late historically inclined, I will adapt my correspondence to your present turn, and throw out some thoughts to you upon the subject of that study, which will serve to fill my paper at least, if they should fail of amusing or instructing you. I have call'd it a study, but in this place I should rather have given it the name of amusement, for tho' it is one of the most rational and improving kind, it should still with you be an amusement, and nothing deeper.

This naturally enough leads me to reflect on the different purposes of reading history, and the different methods which should be pursued by different people in their application to it. But before I proceed I must confess to you that I feel myself in a scrape. I have heedlessly entered a labyrinth, and shall not easily find the right way thro' it, tho' a right way I know there is. The subject is a very serious one, and if I was at all equal to it, I am sure I shall not do it justice in this extempore method of writing, and the haste of a free and friendly correspondence.

If statesmen, soldiers, divines, idle men, and women read history, do you think that they should pursue the same

same method in their reading? The subject is still the same, copious with many sources of improvement; and history will always be looked upon as history by those who are caught with sounds, and build a very tottering way of thinking upon the sandy foundations of hearsay, and common opinion. Amongst the many readers of history comprised under the characters above mentioned, if any one reads with other intentions than those of becoming wiser and better, his labour is lost, his time is thrown away. If the political parts of history are peculiarly the province of a statesman's attention, the sacred and military parts ought to be so of the two next characters I have mentioned, and tho' there seems to be nothing left for the

two

two last upon my list, I am far from thinking the harvest they may reap from this field of science less valuable than what is already disposed of. People in public characters, have or ought to have, a double consideration: They are to make themselves wiser and better, perhaps less for their own sakes than for that of the public, and therefore their chief attention should be aimed, nay confined to the improvement of that branch in which they serve. The far greater part of the community, who have no other public duty incumbent on them than that of making themselves good and honest citizens, and virtuous members of society, may, by attaching themselves particularly to none of these branches, gather the quintessence of

all,

all, and enjoy, nay diffuse in speculative knowledge, and improvement, what for them is unnecessary to mature into practice. In short philosophy should be the pursuit of these *free agents*, and if history be their occupation they should apply to it with a philosophical spirit. I think lord Bollingbroke says somewhere that *history is philosophy teaching by examples*; and certain it is that it abounds with examples, (whether truly or falsely drawn it is not our business to enquire) the contemplation of which and the desire of emulating them must produce the most substantial, and salutary effects. This, therefore, is the kind of historical reading I would recommend to you, and it is that kind for which you are most formed. Search

not

not in these books the knowledge of the world, and of mankind; The knowledge of history is secondary, and only a means by which a good and sound judgment may be better enabled to draw its conclusions, and form its opinions. Dissect history as I have already done in some degree, and you'll find its different parts producing different effects. Examine, for example, that branch of it which ought to be the study of a statesman, and my argument holds good no longer. It is politics he would learn, and there is (in conjunction with the world and practice) the proper school for them. The causes and effects in this particular science are often far removed, and a foundation may be laid in one reign the event and consequence of

of which might not appear 'till centuries after. To see this, and to improve from it, must be by the assistance of history ; no man's experience can suffice to the attainment of this knowledge, nor can the world alone, that space of it which the life of one man occupies, afford sufficient instances to form a politician. What has been said of this article will, with very little alteration, likewise hold good in religion and military knowledge, but by no means in what is generally understood by the knowledge of men and the world. This, not to mention the opposite and contradictory manners, and turn of different nations, varies even in the same country, and, in one century, affords you examples, which, even in the next, you find to

be

be no longer the produce of the same soil. Judge therefore, if these are the means of acquiring the knowledge of the age you live in. I may in answer be told, that mankind have ever been subject to the same passions, that virtue and vice have always been the same ; and that avarice, and dishonest ambition have thro' all ages been as fatal to particular states, as wisdom, courage, and disinterestedness have been instrumental in saving others. This must be allowed, but who is so raw as to want to be informed of it ? These great outlines of characters can never afford the knowledge we are debating upon. Who is so ignorant as not to know that a man is composed of a head, a body, arms, legs, &c ? and yet how few are there who

are

are acquainted with the secret springs of action and motion, those nice and astonishing parts of our frame, without which those external and obvious would be a rude and helpless mass ! I need not tell *you* how fine and delicate the particles are which constitute the difference of characters, nor need I show you the absurdity of looking for them in history, when it is so difficult for the most penetrating eye to catch them, even in real life. Written example is more prevalent than precept, say some, and therefore history is more improving than philosophy. If in a very complying mood, I should once make this concession, I shall insist on its consequence, rob written example of its usurped powers, and give them to real and natural example.

ple. What are characters in history but copies, and generally very imperfect and partial copies, of what we have every day before our eyes, and who can be mad enough to study the one, who has constant opportunities of diving into the other? As far, however, as imitation goes, they are both excellent; I have said it above, it matters not how like the picture be, provided it be good and worthy to be followed; it is knowledge only, and not imitation that I debate upon, and I must still infist that though history might abound in characters which deserve imitation, and with instances of vice to excite our abhorrence, yet it is not from hence that the *knowledge* of mankind is to be learnt; history is only a secondary assistant, and to a

genius

genius is in this pursuit, of little or no
advantage.

I think I said somewhere in the course
of this letter (and, if I did, I am in-
clined to retract my saying) that men
of business, and those in any particu-
lar calling should confine themselves
to those branches of history which re-
late immediately to their several func-
tions. As the world goes, it would
be well if they did even that, but
upon a little more reflection I think
it were to be wished that they would
carry their study a little farther. You
will guess that I am hankering after
my favorite mistress, philosophy, and
I must own that I could wish, for the
sake of the world, that the governors
of it would mix some of that philoso-

phical spirit I have recommended to you, with the spirit of knowledge with which they generally apply to the study in question. A man cannot be great 'till he is good, tho' he were buried in honours, and I fear that knowledge alone, procured with the spirit, and for the purposes it generally is, will never produce both those qualifications. In ancient times the great men retired from the world to fit themselves for the government of it, and became philosophers before they attempted to be statesmen. Nature, mathematics, morals and religion were their pursuit, and by inuring themselves to solitude, silence, and contemplation, they calmed their passions and attained to such a pitch of true heroism and generosity, that no world-

ly

ly considerations could turn them from the interest of the public, and the service of the commonwealth they lived in. Philip of Macedon (of whom you have read) was indebted to the school of Pythagoras for those virtues which made him so estimable, and those conquests which gained him such veneration, and indeed it is by no means a clear case that his son would have eclipsed him without his own assistance: It is obvious that he must have contributed greatly to his successes, which, and indeed the foundation of the Macedonian Monarchy, must in a great measure have been owing to the well disciplined army which Philip left. Alexander too was educated by Aristotle; and Alci-biades and Xenophon (the latter of

whom was consummate in the different characters of a soldier, a statesman and a philosopher) were diligent disciples of Socrates. To these I may justly add a very modern example of the advantages which arise from the improvement of that turn of thought, which to you I need not describe.

The king of Prussia is not naturally the hero he has made himself. By the force of that kind of application which affects the heart perhaps more than the head (and which is visible in every thing he says, writes, and does) he first conquered himself before he subdued his enemies ; and tho' we in humble life have no such enemies to combat, believe me, we may reap as many advantages as Prussia has done, from effecting that first and most material

terial conquest. A shallow moralist would, perhaps, on reading this, think me either very insincere, or much altered, and would not fail to suppose that I am preaching up abstinence of all kinds, comprehending no other victory over ourselves than that over our appetites. Alas, how much pity do such conquerors deserve, whilst in the midst of their boasted triumphs, they are miserable slaves to a thousand weak prejudices! These, however friendly their appearance, are our most formidable enemies, and as I think I see them in dreadful line of battle stretched over many quires of paper, I shall not at present draw up my forces against them, at least not venture a pitched battle with these inglorious weapons

of vain and unmanly controversy, but to return to our subject.

If you are inclined to pursue history, I dare say you would chuse to do it with some regularity and method, without which you'll lose great part of the pleasure and advantage of it. If you trust to the many pedants who have taken great pains to save us trouble (as they pretend) and who have published volume upon volume, under the title of *Method of Reading History*, your whole Life would be taken up in making yourself mistress of the studies which are only preparatory to it. A degree of geography is absolutely necessary, and so it is of chronology; but to be as well acquainted with this last science, as these

these people would pretend is necessary, you must be deep in astronomy, and to be deep in that you must be deep in geometry, and several branches of mathematics, with all the arithmetic that's necessary to them. In short, people of the world are the best advisers for those of their own sort, but as few of them are capable, and those by no means inclined to write treatises of this kind we must be satisfied with the lights and assistance we have. I see not, however, why we should not help each other as well as we can, without becoming authors. Consider, therefore, well whether you will follow a regular plan of history, and give yourself some little trouble to prepare yourself for reading it with advantage, and I will do my endeavour to make

it as easy to you as possible. The task will be a difficult one, and perhaps beyond my powers, but it will be a very agreeable one to me on your account, and no trifling advantage on my own.

After this long scrawl you'll not be sorry to be released, nor to say the truth, am I sorry to be arrived at last to that part of my letter where general custom, and that only, makes it necessary that I should repeat to you, my dear friend, that I am

Most affectionately

Your's, &c.

L E T.

LETTER IV.

To Louisa.

I can never be unwilling to comply with any request of yours, my dear Louisa, but little more can be added to the general directions my last contain'd, and your own good judgment will suggest all that is necessary without any assistance. It will at once occur to you that as opinions can as easily be made habitual as customs, it is a matter of great moment, to give an early habit of thinking rightly, and that this will more effectually be done by the general tenor of the conversations that pass in the hearing of children,

dren, than by any particular instructions address'd to themselves: Thus, for instance, if they always hear cleanliness mention'd as a matter of essential consequence, finery with contempt, and those people spoken of as insignificant triflers who discover any regard to the shew of dress, they will insensibly acquire a habit of esteeming cleanliness the only material part of their own dress, without paying any sort of attention to the ornaments of it. I have seen the effect of this method in a child who at four years old gravely censured the weakness of a person's judgment that had admired his new buckles. In the same manner benevolence to mankind, compassion toward the brute and insect creation, and every other good principle

ciple may be implanted in infancy, and insensibly improved and strengthened in the mind, 'till right opinions are so habitually rooted as to influence every part of the conduct through all future life ; which is seldom, if ever, effected by formal precepts and grave instructions. What children imbibe as by accident from the sentiments of others, always make a stronger and more lasting impression than any lessons which appear to be intended peculiarly for themselves ; this may perhaps be owing to the constrained attention required in the latter case, whereas in the former it is always voluntary, and, if not checked, will be constant from their natural curiosity ; this curiosity, properly managed, is the best ground you can have

to

to work upon, yet I have often with concern heard children so severely reprimanded for it as to make them afraid of seeming to hear the conversations that passed in their presence; on the contrary, not the least notice should apparently be taken of their attention, while every thing said before them should be regulated by the expectation of it: On this account chiefly the bringing them into mix'd company is injurious, as the contrariety of opinions will be apt to confuse their minds, which, to be advantageously form'd, must be used to a perfect sameness of sentiment in all whom they converse with, or are attended by; here also the great difficulty is to meet with servants who will minutely observe every direction given them,
which

which is a point of so much consequence as to deserve the utmost care; you will here see the necessity of extending your instructions to them even to the most trifling circumstances, that nothing may be left to their own judgment, which can never be depended on, and that those servants who particularly belong to the nursery should only be admitted into it, nor on any occasion others be allowed to converse with them *there*, for reasons too obvious to need repeating.

The impropriety of one custom may not, perhaps from its being so general, occur to you with all the strength it deserves; I mean that of promising wives and husbands as a distant reward for the good behaviour

of

of children ; to which may be added the no less absurd practice of teaching them to give each other that appellation almost as soon as they can speak, I believe, my dear Louisa, you need only reflect seriously upon the effect this must necessarily have on their young minds, and on the consequences that may naturally be supposed to follow from it, to suggest to yourself all I could say on the subject. Your judgment is sufficient to direct you in all the new relations you are entering upon, and your invariable inclination to discharge your duty will secure a constant attention to the dictates of it; nor have I the least doubt of your setting an example, in every respect, worthy of imitation, and consequently of your enjoying through life as great

a share of happiness as this imperfect state can admit of, to be encreased only by that unalterable felicity beyond the grave, which must be the reward of virtues like your's—This opinion continually affords the sincerest pleasure to

Your affectionate, &c.

The

The ADVENTURES of ALPHONSE
continued.

IT will I fear be very difficult to give you a just idea of the manner in which these superior beings perform their usual operations, as any description will be far from adequate to the subject—but shall do my best.

I have already told you that matter obstructs not their passage, for whenever there is a necessity to impart to the mind of man any particular train of thought, they convey themselves directly to the sensory, and there impress ideas by presenting them regularly class'd : These are received much in the same manner by the mind, as those

those convey'd by the organs of sight from the arrangement of letters on a book to a person who is reading. Such impressions can be successively changed, quick as thought; the mind is passive in the reception, but perfectly free and active in the choice either to adopt or reject them, their strength depends on the continuance or repetition of the same representations, and in cases of great moment the guardian power never fails to give *these* all the force they can receive, consistent with that perfect freedom of will which it is not permitted him to infringe.

I know not whether I have explain'd myself intelligibly, but can-

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not find words that will more nearly
convey the idea I wish to impart.

The good Rodolphus was a pleasing

contrast to those I had been just ex-
amining—To the most refined and

philosophic notions of the beauty of
truth, virtue, and moral fitness; was

join'd that exalted piety which is pe-
culiar to the christian system. I wish'd

to see the retrospect of his life, and
found it instantly presented on my

mirrour.

When very young, religion ap-
pear'd to him an affair of too much

consequence to be taken upon trust,
or determined by education; this led

him to a minute enquiry into the
evidences of every system that pre-

tended

tended to a divine authority; the result of which was a firm belief of the christian dispensation; not what is now commonly called christianity; but that original institution, pure, and unmix'd with all the corruptions since introduced by it's mistaken, or designing professors. The ceremonies enjoined by men, he had no faith in, but thought it right to conform to them, rather than disturb the minds of those who, from a confused connection of ideas, were unable to separate the wheat from the chaff: An accurate observation had convinced him that the inferior class of mortals were incapable of comprehending the sublime spirit of true religion; and, consequently, that to such, forms were essentially serviceable; on this

Account he regularly conform'd to the establish'd customs, but never pretended to lay any stress on them to those he knew were able to discern the substance from the shadow, farther than the influence of example.

He chose a religious habit believing it would enable him to be most useful to society. By intrinsic merit and universal esteem he had risen to the highest dignities in the church, and not only discharged the duties of his function in a manner that did honour to his profession, but was so strict in his observation of the conduct and characters of all the clergy under his jurisdiction, that it produced a general reformation in their behaviour as far as his influence extended. In the course

course of a long life many benefices had fallen to his disposal, all these were bestowed on men every way qualified for the office, nor could any interest procure from him a living for a man whose life corresponded not in every respect with his profession. He had long enjoyed large revenues, lived at a small expence ; on this account was by some suspected of avarice and supposed to have amass'd great sums of money, which was the only blemish that seemed to shade the brightness of his character ; I had been myself apt to give into this opinion, notwithstanding my knowledge of some very great acts of public charity, that appear'd incompatible with such a disposition ; in the succession of events that now presented themselves regu-

larly to my view, in the order they had occurred, I saw with shame the injustice these unworthy sentiments had done him. It had been his constant custom to appropriate a certain sum for his own annual expences, which was never exceeded, but on those extraordinary occasions his public character had sometimes made necessary ; this sum was trifling compared with his revenue ; the whole residue had been employ'd in the relief and support of the distress'd and destitute : I saw with astonishment whole troops of orphans that had been educated and placed out to different employments at his expence, and were now become useful and flourishing members of society. Whole families that by unavoidable misfortunes had

had been reduced to the utmost distress and misery, restored by his bounty to their former comfortable state, and enabled to continue their several occupations. It would take a volume to recount the instances of this nature, which my mirrour presented, I shall relate only one that particularly struck me.

When Rodolphus was very young he contracted an intimacy with a youth whose name was Lodivico ; they were of the same standing at the university, prosecuted their studies together, and came away from them at the same time ; the continuance of this intimacy gave Lodivico frequent opportunities of seeing the sister of Rodolphus ; whose beauty and various accomplishments

soon made an entire conquest over his heart. He ask'd her in marriage of her father who had no objection to the proposals, but left the decision wholly to his daughter. She was at the same time addressed by a young gentleman whose fortune and family were so nearly equal that no preference could on that account be given to either, and not being biased by any particular inclination, was only desirous of making the most prudent choice. She had a high opinion of her brother's judgment, and consulted him upon the occasion. Rodolphus was much embarrassed between his friendship for Lodivico, and regard for his sister's welfare; the latter however appearing to him an affair of the most importance, he at length gave

gave his opinion, though with great reluctance, in favour of the other suitor, whose disposition and temper were much more likely to ensure domestic happiness ; this occasion'd the dismission of his friend, who from that moment became his implacable enemy ; found means of injuring him very materially with his father ; industriously propagated reports injurious to his character, which in the early part of life proved very disadvantageous to him ; and endeavoured, by every possible method, to hinder those preferments his known merit afterwards obtain'd. The good Rodolphus bore this treatment with the utmost patience and composure, and felt much more concern to find his friend, who had really many valuable qualities,

qualities, capable of indulging so unjust and implacable a resentment, than he could have suffer'd from any ill that it might have been productive of to himself.

Lodivico's hatred to the brother abated not with his affection to the sister; the former continued equally strong after the latter had given place to a new passion for the daughter of an opulent merchant, whom he obtain'd in marriage; and, after the death of her father, carried on the same profession very successfully for some years; when, by various accidents that it is needless to repeat, he was entirely ruined; all his effects were seiz'd, which being insufficient to pay his debts, he was reduced, with

with a wife and five children, to a state of beggary. Rodolphus immediately enquired into the state of his affairs, and as soon as he had discovered what was owing to his creditors sent him a sufficient sum not only to discharge all his debts, but to enable him to commence his former occupation, and managed the matter with that care and secrecy that Lodovico never knew from whom he had received so uncommon an obligation.

Whether his knowledge of Rodolphus led him to believe he was the only man capable of so great an act of generosity, or whether his misfortunes had softened his mind, and brought him to a sense of the injustice done to his friend I know not, but the

the first use he made of liberty was to throw himself at his feet and implore forgiveness with the sincerest contrition for his past ill usage. The good man embraced him with the utmost tenderness, welcom'd his returning friendship, desired the interruption of it might be buried in eternal oblivion ; and rejoiced with him at the happy deliverance from his late distress, in a manner that would have taken off, even from a suspicion that he had been himself at all accessory to it.

Lodivico by this bounty and his own succeeding industry retrieved his fortune, and lived to provide handsomely for his whole family. The circumstances of this story, by which

the

the generosity of the action was so peculiarly heighten'd, affected me so strongly, that I could not allow myself to deprive you of the pleasure of a particular recital, by passing it over in common with others of the same nature. In like manner I found this excellent man had been always careful to conceal those instances of benevolence that did honour to human nature, and content with the approbation of his own conscience modestly declined the praise his virtue deserved.

Quick as the succession of events pass'd on my mirrour my faculties were so enlarged by the removal of the usual incumbrance of matter, that I found no difficulty in comprehending at once the whole history of a long

long life, without either losing the minutest circumstance, or interrupting my attention to the conversation of the persons before me, but the difference I now feel in myself convinces me that your attention may very probably have been so much taken up by this little relation as to have lost the remembrance where we began it, shall therefore remind you that it was while Rodolphus was conversing with the two fathers that I examined the retrospect of his life. This conversation was for some time carried on with as much hypocrisy on their parts as real piety on his; the superior, sensible of the great advantage that might accrue from the sanction of Rodolphus's concurrence in the scheme they had been concerting, deliberated in what

what manner to engage him in it, which was instantly seconded by the malignant spirits who presented a plan so artfully form'd, that the good man seem'd on the point of being deceiv'd into a compliance: Alarm'd at the danger I thought him in, why, said I to my conductor, does not the guardian of Rodolphus warn him of this villain's artifice? Fear not, replied he, I have already told you that these malevolent beings have no power to injure, or deceive the good; if they here intend it their design will be defeated—Observe the consequence—Scarcely were my apprehensions relieved by this assurance, when the earth again trembled with an agitation that shook the edifice from its foundation, in a moment the whole

fabric

fabric was so disjointed that it appear'd evidently impossible for any beneath the roof to escape before its fall must bury them under the ruins. In my first emotion, upon seeing the loosened stones tumbling in heaps from the summit of the building, I imagin'd myself able to rescue Rodolphus, and should instantly have descended with that intention, had I not been prevented by my companion, who reminded me that those walls my sight was permitted to penetrate, were yet impervious to my body which was still mortal, and if on the same spot with those before me would be subjected to equal danger, without a possibility of lending them assistance, or even preserving myself; checked by this admonition, I waited the catastrophe

tastrophe with all the grief and anxiety such a scene must naturally inspire; nor could help expressing my belief that the benevolent being had been inattentive to his charge, or would have endeavoured to prevent a visit, the consequences of which he must have foreseen. Your opinion, said my companion, is premature, and your judgment at present obscured by prejudices that will soon be removed.—Behold the event, and observe attentively the different effects which the present imminent danger has on the minds before you, and the different employment of the attendant spirits.—Here again I am at a loss how to describe to you the particulars of this scene; for though my enlarged faculties at the time distinctly observed,

and perfectly comprehended every motion, and every sensation of the several actions in the short space of a few minutes in which the whole pass'd ; I now find it a work of time even to recollect and separate all those complicated ideas that were then instantly received, without the least degree of confusion ; nor do I know whether the powers of language I am master of will be sufficient to give you any tolerable notion of things that I feel my own incapacity to express, notwithstanding the perfectly clear impression my mind still retains of them.

The apprehension of danger, and the desire of escaping from the house were the first sensations produced by the shock on all who felt it ; and
operated

operated so far in the same manner, that each, as by common consent, made towards the stairs, but alack ! no stairs remain'd ; the space those late had occupied was void, and far below the trembling floor appear'd a heap of ruins, from whence alternate clouds of smoke, and bursting flames came issuing forth in horrible succession.

The effects of this discovery were as opposite as the dispositions of the men who now every moment expected the period of mortality, without even a glimmering hope of relief. Never was there a more striking contrast ! On one side, native virtue, and acquir'd improvements brighten'd at the prospect into an almost angelic per-

fection ; whilst on the other, the thin-
sel'd garb of foul hypocrify, that so
long had undetected pass'd upon the
world for real piety, now by despair
thrown off, exposed to open view the
dark recesses of those guilty bosoms
it had 'till then too artfully conceal'd
not to evade even the shadow of suspi-
cion : Deceit no longer could avail,
and every painful sensation that op-
press'd the mind appear'd upon their
brows, in such a medley of remorse,
rage, terror, impiety, and despair,
that even Raphael's pencil would in
vain have try'd to catch a faint resem-
blance of the complicated passions
that distorted their whole counten-
ances ! as impossible would the great ar-
tist have found it to express the placid
air, the superior dignity of manner,
and

and the lively sense of conscious virtue, that seem'd to beam with more than mortal radiance through all the features of Rodolphus, when pointing to the dreadful chasm that might have struck terror to the boldest heart, he said with perfect composure.— The scene is closing on us, we are call'd, my friends, from this stage of life, may the parts we have acted on it be approv'd by our heavenly Father before whom our disembodied spirits will presently appear ! I doubt not but the sincerity of our hearts will be favourably accepted, notwithstanding all the imperfections of our conduct. An incoherent answer, full of all the terrors that guilt could inspire astonished the good man beyond expression, who had not time to reply

K 3 before

before the fall of the whole fabric overwhelm'd them all in its ruins: This catastrophe happened within six minutes after the first shock which it may be necessary to mention, as the time I have taken in repeating the incidents has probably led you to suppose a much longer interval. The heap of stones and rubbish, beneath which they were buried, divided them from each other as in separate graves, all were mortally wounded, but neither of them kill'd by the fall; the friar had receiv'd a contusion in his head, which seem'd to render him totally insensible, the superior of the convent, and Rodolphus both retain'd their senses, and were perfectly conscious of their situation. I was so wholly occupied in observing their different

ferent sensations, and the employment of the attendant spirits, that I again forgot my own mortality, and in attempting to descend nearer to the scene, was on the point of striking against the roof of an adjoining building with a force that might have been fatal to me, had not my watchful guardian preserved me from the danger by so sharp a reproof that I was never afterwards guilty of the like indiscretion.

Insensible as the friar appeared, I observed that the sensory was yet capable of receiving impressions; but the memory being wholly lost by the pressure on the brain, no power of arranging, or retaining them remain'd;

the number of malicious beings increased around him, who diverted themselves by collecting a set of the most horrid and terrifying images that could be thrown together, and presenting them to the mind, which produced a confus'd apprehension of impending danger, a strugling attempt to fly from it, with a conscious inability to rise from the place, or rather a perception of resistance superior to every effort of motion ; this occasion'd repeated exertions as painful as they were fruitless, which appear'd like strong convulsions and continued with but little intermission 'till the soul bursting from its confinement to a disorder'd mass of matter that had for a while confin'd all its ideas, regain'd

gain'd a clear perception of its situation; and a perfect consciousness of those accumulated crimes which now entail'd the most poignant anguish.

providing that to the extent possible
to do so, the same or similar conditions
prevailing during the period of the
negotiations, a concluding agreement
to the terms of which is concluded in aspi-
rations to settle such disputes in
accordance with the principles of
good faith and justice, and in
order to facilitate the conclusion of
more durable agreements like
those now existing which agree with
the principles of the law of the
United Nations and consistent with
the principles of justice and
good faith, and in order to
enable the parties to
divide

LETTER V.

To Mrs. G—.

THE letter I have just received from you, my dear madam, gives me inexpressible pleasure, as I find by it that my endeavours have been successful to make you thoroughly acquainted with the peculiar character of my friend ; your observations are perfectly just, and I entirely agree with you, that notwithstanding her youth and natural gaiety of heart might have led her, after the death of her mother, into many indiscretions, yet, if left wholly to herself, they would never have been of a nature

ture productive of any serious ill consequences ; nor could any thing, I am persuaded, but the mistaken and improper restraint that was laid on her actions, have possibly led her into that fatal error, which proved the source of so many misfortunes.

Prudentia was certainly a good well meaning woman, but wholly unqualified for the management of a girl who had a much better understanding than herself, saw her inability with contempt, and was piqued at being subjected to a government she with too much reason despised, as in reality all the measures taken were evidently wrong. And this, I believe, has generally been the case with ancient maiden ladies, who have officiously

ciuously usurped the management of children ; a thing quite out of their sphere, and which, of all others, they are least fit for. Their ignorance in these matters is by no means culpable, the fault is only in the indulgence of that meddling disposition which leads them to give their unasked opinion and advice, where they have no business to interfere, and in things wherein they have no judgment. This is a fault productive of so many evils in the world, that I can hardly allow it to be a pardonable one.

These people are too apt to indulge a suspicious temper, and nothing can be more injurious to young minds than the appearance of suspicion in the persons

sons under whose direction they are. My own observations have convinced me to a demonstration, that no girl of spirit, understanding, and generosity of temper, was ever guarded from any wrong step by having a visible watch set upon her actions. That lively turn, which is generally denominated spirit, will ever oppose an arbitrary restraint ; where power is wanting to make that opposition effectual, understanding will degenerate into cunning, and fraud be substituted in the room of force ; and this is the first step toward the ruin of a good disposition. A generous mind very ill brooks undeserved suspicion ; and too often has that sown the seeds of vice in a heart, whose natural soil would never have produced it : An extreme vivacity

vivacity often occasions a total vacancy of thought, every action, during that interval, is neither guided by any intention, or influenced by any proposed end, but rather the result of a spontaneous motion of the fancy; some trifle catches the imagination, 'tis instantly pursued without considering either present propriety or future consequences: The young heart, conscious of perfect purity, is equally ignorant of guilt or fear; pleasure or rather amusement is it's aim; every object offers, in some degree, the gratification of it's wish; amidst so vast a variety the choice is bewildered; one pursuit is interrupted by another, and none can be carried on with steadiness, as no distant end is ever proposed: During this period, vice, and

every

every thing that leads to it, is an utter stranger to the heart; mirth, jollity, and a kind of wild rattle, are its chief delights; nothing beyond is intended, desired, or even thought of; and there cannot, I think, be a greater error in education than the early restraint, which is generally laid on these natural, innocent, and pleasing sensations.

Supposing men in a state of nature, uninfluenced by prejudice, and uncorrupted by example, I am inclined to believe the Sexes might converse with each other with the most unreserv'd freedom for the first sixteen, and often twenty years unconscious of any distinction. The forms we have prescribed put the young mind upon an enquiry into the cause, and raises a thousand

thousand premature sensations; thus the absurd precautions we take to guard against vice, perhaps, introduces the first notion of it: To the word modesty we are apt to affix too general and uniform an idea; and consequently always expect it to appear in the same form, and be cloathed in the same expressions; from hence arises innumerable mistakes; because in fact nothing so much varies its form according to the difference of age propensities, or encrease of knowledge. That sort of behaviour which in a woman of thirty might justly be censured as an improper and indecent assurance, may be the strongest proof of the most perfect innocence in a girl of fifteen.

Either

pp 145-160 missing

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crimes, with every aggravating circumstance that could heighten the guilt of them, which gave added poignancy to his anguish: The misery he sustained exceeds all power of description, and admitted of no other encrease on his quitting the body, than what naturally resulted from the more lively sensations of the mind when distrobed of matter; and from beholding myriads of exquisitely happy beings, whose delightful society he had lost the given opportunity of qualifying himself for enjoying: The evil spirits who surrounded him sometimes cast an involuntary glance toward Rodolphus, but turn'd instantly from a sight which, I observed, gave them a mortification far superior to the transient gratification their malig-

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nant dispositions received from the cruel exercise of their tormenting power. This great good man, not less dangerously wounded, scarce felt an uneasy sensation ; his watchful guardian was instantly join'd by a great number of the same benevolent class, ready to welcome him to a glorious immortality ; to which they sooth'd his passage by presenting to his imagination a delightful prospect of the infinitely advantageous exchange he was on the point of making ; and in crowding on his mind an assemblage of the most pleasing ideas, which so agreeably occupied his whole attention as to render him almost insensible of that corporeal pain, which was hastening his dissolution : When fainting from loss of blood, and convulsed by the

the hand of death, he appear'd to have lost all power of thought and sensation, I perceived that the same agreeable ideas were retain'd, and only grew more confused as the period of mortality approach'd; he felt no pain from the convulsive motions, which to himself seem'd only a forcible exertion to shake off an incumbrance that restrain'd him from mixing in a scene he beheld with unspeakable pleasure; the effort at length succeeded, and inexpressible happiness was the result.

I see said my companion that you are now convinced of your mistake, and are satisfied that it was not owing to any negligence of his charge that the guardian of Rodolphus prevented

not this visit. Mankind are too apt to regard death in every shape as an evil, we know it is never such to a good man, and therefore wish not to prevent the period of mortality, but only to guard against the ills and inconveniences it is liable to. In this instance you have seen how efficacious our power is to support the mind under the most painful circumstances of body, even to a degree of pleasure through the whole closing scene of life; the nature of our office, and the manner of our operation have been here clearly evinced to you; in situations that outwardly appear'd exactly similar, you saw how different were the sensations of the sufferers; on one side the horrors of the mind were encreased by a lively consciousness

ness that the deplorable condition to which the body was reduced must necessarily bring on an immediate dissolution ; while on the other, that very certainty eased the anguish of every mortal wound. Learn hence Alphonso, added he, that the reward of virtue is not deferr'd 'till after the period of mortality, but that through every afflictive scene of human life the good man is not only supported by the conscious rectitude of his own mind, but on extraordinary occasions will be raised by our assisting impressions even above the sensation of temporal evils.

Our reflections were interrupted by the report of a pistol which drew my attention to the spot, where a man,

M 3 who

who at the age of sixty and extremely infirm, had impatiently anticipated the hand of nature by becoming his own executioner ; the wound was so effectual that the soul in a moment found a passage through it, and when I turned my eyes to the place was issuing from the body with all the marks of grief, and anguish that disappointed expectations from an irrevocable act of impious folly could produce. Imagine to yourself a man who, disgusted at some disagreeable family occurrences, had quitted his house in a fit of ill humour with an intention to form in some distant country a new set of more pleasing connections than those he had hastily resolved to renounce ; suppose him, while in sight of the house he had

thus left, surprised by the appearance of a banditti ready to beset him, precipitantly returning to the once hospitable door for shelter, attempting a re-entrance and finding it for ever bar'd against him : If you can form to yourself an idea of all the horrors of such a situation, 'twill afford but a faint resemblance of the first impressions this disembodied mind received on it's unbidden entrance into a new state of existence ; instantly convinced of the fatal error, it would fain have receded, at the unexpected view of greater ills than those now left behind, and once more have occupied the too hastily deserted post, but beheld with unutterable grief those voluntary depredations in the mortal system which render'd a return impossible. On examining his

retrospect I found but few incidents worth remarking through the course of so long a life ; avarice had been the prevailing passion, and every inclination had yielded to the stronger desire of accumulating useless riches ; by indefatigable industry, and unequalled parsimony, he became one of the most opulent merchants in the kingdom. A dispute arising concerning a very advantageous purchase he had made, and a suit being commenced against him on that account, he put a period to his life to save the expence of defending it.

Through his whole retrospect no good action appeared ; but his faults seemed all of the negative kind ; I mean rather the omission of good

good, than the commission of ill ; nor could I discover any incident of a nature so atrocious as to banish the attendance of his good genius. My instructor remarked my observation, and confirmed the truth of it, by telling me that the guardian power did not abandon him 'till he found it impossible to prevent his executing the pre-meditated design that put a period to his life. A crime, added he, of the deepest dye, that bids defiance to the Creator by daring, unbidden, to desert the post assigned—that flies in the face of mercy, ungratefully throwing up the blessing kindly given, to rush presumptuous into the presence of a justly offended Deity ! An irrevocable step ! the only one that admits not of retraction by re-

pen-

penance ; for how great forever may be the improbability that a heart totally depraved should return to virtue, yet while life remains it is at least possible ; and there have been instances of men, who, after having been vicious to a degree that has banished the attendance of every good being, have by some extraordinary event been awakened as from a lethargy, changed the whole tenor of their conduct, and become eminent for their virtue ; but these instances are so very rare that we never expect them, and always conclude the man irrecoverably lost who has forfeited the protection of his guardian angel ; yet should he even after that become truly penitent (which is easily to be distinguished from the transient remorse that

that never prevents the execution of a crime, but serves only to encrease the guilt of it in proportion to the time gained for reflection) some of us instantly take charge of the repenting criminal, drive from their post the malevolent beings to whom he had been abandoned, and aid with all our force his determined reformation: But see an instance offers for your observation. I turned my eyes to the place directed, and beheld a man near fifty years of age, contemplating the corps of a beautiful young lady that seemed scarcely dead, for the blood still ran from a mortal wound on her temple: In the room were two younger ladies, and a very amiable youth, bathed in tears; their silent glances seemed to accuse the barbarity of the man whose mind

was

was wholly occupied by the sad object of his attention. After a long silence he exclaimed—Oh! my child, my dearest child! then pausing for a while, a copious flow of tears succeeded. On examining his heart, I saw that he now appeared to himself in a true light; and felt all the remorse that a conviction of superlative guilt ought to inspire. He was at this time surrounded by a great number of malevolent beings, who, drawn together by an event so adapted to their inclination, had joined his usual attendants: These, not having the remotest apprehension of his return to virtue, strove to encrease the anguish of his mind, by presenting to his imagination, in a quick succession, all the most atrocious crimes of his past life,

ex-

expecting that either madness or suicide would be the consequence. His breast was rent with unutterable woe; he would have prayed, but blushed at the thought of daring to address that Deity whose laws he had made a jest of, and whose worship he had so long treated with contempt. At length throwing himself on the floor, in an agitation of mind not to be conceived—Is it possible, cried he, that a wretch like me can find mercy from the God of Righteousness, to whom my execrable crimes must have long since rendered me an object of detestation? Ah no! I dare not hope; the measure of my guilt, before too full, now overflows by this last act of cruelty, for which my name shall, by all future ages, be remembered

bered with an abhorrence equal to that I now feel at the recollection of my past impiety.—Again he paused, rolled on the floor, and beat his throbbing breast, while his whole frame was shaken with convulsive motions ; then lifting up his hands, his streaming eyes rivetted to the ground.—I presume not, he cried, to implore, even of the God of Mercy, that forgiveness, of which, with deep contrition, I confess myself unworthy :— I have not a wish for added life, but to make an atonement for my past injustice, and to prove the sincerity of my repentance, by an invariable obedience to those sacred laws I have hitherto impiously disregarded.—Alas ! I hope not such unmerited favour,— nor dare to ask the continuance of that mercy

mercy I have so long abused.—Thou knowest, O God! my every thought.—I see myself with horror—am overwhelmed with shame and conscious guilt, and wait the dreadful sentence thy justice must pronounce.—Whate'er that proves, I only am to blame.—Thou kindly gavest the power of happiness:—'Tis to the abuse of that gift I owe my misery.—Thy righteous will be done,—to that, with humble resignation, I unrepining yield, and must, however wretched, own the punishment deserved!

Scarcé had he ceased speaking, when the guardian powers that were attending his children advanced towards him; those of the bad order, by whom he was surrounded, being

many

many more in number seem'd, I thought at first, to make a shew of opposition, but aw'd by the majesty of virtue soon retir'd in confusion, and with sullen discontent watch'd at a distance the event. These good beings soften'd the horrors of his mind, and sooth'd his despairing agony, by presenting every thought that might inspire a hope of mercy, and confirm his resolutions.

I was impatient to examine his retrospect; 'twas a wretched, and indeed, a very peculiar one, full of contradictory vices. I could wish to give you the whole of this extraordinary history, but have time only at present for a sketch of it. He was of a good family, married young to a lady who deserved

deserved a better fate, and for many years made him a good wife in spight of continued ill usage; her constant compliance with all his humours increased his tyranny, which was exercised in a ceaseless opposition to every thing she chose, and extended even to the most trifling circumstances. He pretended to be jealous of every man she spoke to, yet frequently and designedly subjected her to the attacks of libertines, often placed her in situations that could not fail of being detrimental to her character, and afterwards upbraided her for a compliance with those absolute commands, which he knew she dared not disobey.

To support expences that far exceeded his income, he sold the jewels

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and plate she brought him ; when these were exhausted, made her borrow of gentlemen as for her own use, and then cruelly urged her obtaining money by this means as an evident proof of her infidelity. He hated the company of virtuous or modest women, disliked her acquaintance with any ladies on whom he had not some design ; all such he obliged her to treat with peculiar civility ; with these, some of whom were women of fortune, and supposed of character, the most indecent liberties were taken, and the lewdest conversations, carried on while she was forcibly detain'd, by locking the door, as an imagin'd sanction to them ; I was shock'd beyond measure at the lively representation of her distress and confusion, which were

were sometimes increased by the presence of other gentlemen ; amongst these, though all men of libertine principles, I was pleased to see that one only ever had the cruelty to join him, while the rest detesting his brutality, and pitying her painful situation, intercepted the shocking scene by gathering round her, and strove to divert her attention by more becoming subjects of conversation ; he regarded this as a tacit reproof, which he was the more provoked at as he felt the justice of it ; and fail'd not to draw from hence an excuse for succeeding ill-humour, on pretence that she had been giving ear to improper addresses. With a continual affectation of jealousy he was never really suspicious of her, but on the contrary, depended

so securely on her conduct that he scrupled not to get quit of an interruption to an intrigue by taking a gentleman, whose presence was inconvenient to him, to her chamber with an injunction to stay there 'till he came, and notwithstanding she detain'd a female companion and sat up 'till he return'd in the morning from his mistress, he loaded her with all the abuse that ill-nature or jealousy could dictate, for suffering this man to stay with them, tho' he knew it was merely in compliance with his inclination which she had then never dar'd to oppose.

The mirror presented innumerable instances of a similiar kind which we must

must pass over in silence, and incredible as it may seem I observed he had three times carried an intrigue to its utmost limits in her presence, and afterwards not only permitted one of the girls to affront and insult her by countermanding all her orders in her own house, usurping her place at the table, and opposing her inclination in every instance, but encouraged that opposition by joining in it. She bore his ill usage many years with uncommon patience, in hopes that time would work a reformation, and implicitly obey'd all his commands 'till he enjoin'd her to get a near relation of hers to sign his name on a sheet of blank paper, over which he proposed to have an irrevocable deed of gift drawn up, to the amount of all the man possessed;

here, honour, and honesty forbade a compliance, and after endeavouring in vain to dissuade him from so unjustifiable a design, she positively refused to be accessory to it. He was irritated beyond measure at this refusal, redoubled his tyranny, and strove by every possible method to make her compleatly miserable: Twice urged by the desire of revenge he deliberated on putting a period to her life, and even made a shew of attempting it; but the horrors of a gibbet, happily occurring to his thoughts, restrain'd his lifted arm; for long before this period every good being had deserted him. Her patience was at length exhausted, and renouncing the flattering hope of any favourable change in his disposition, she resolved

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to do only what appear'd to her to be right regardless of those improper commands she had so long implicitly obey'd: In consequence of this he grew outrageous, encouraged his servants to insult her and on her refusing to concur in a measure that would have been detrimental to his children, and which could not be effected without her consent, he swore to revenge it by the ruin of her character; to effect this purpose he publickly accused her of infidelity, and offer'd considerable bribes to the menial servants to obtain their testimony in support of the accusation, who from an honest principle sent her this information attested by their oaths. One woman, tempted by a sum so considerable as to purchase the husband she wanted, pro-

mised all that was required ; her marriage was solemnized, and her fortune paid ; after which, with the husband's consent, he took her to a small house he had hired for his private amours, where he carried on a secret intimacy with her that he knew not was discover'd by the family. Here she was kept several months, daily instructed and cross questioned by a cunning attorney, 'till she was thought sufficiently expert in her part, when by the help of this woman's false evidence (tho' confused and contradictory in many parts) he succeeded so far as to throw an odium on his wife's character, but could not obtain a divorce, the evidence not being thought sufficient for that purpose. The consequence of this public rupture was a separation

separation by mutual consent, from which she felt no pain but for her children; he had many by her, on whom his cruelty had been exercised from their earliest infancy: They were often severely beaten before they could speak plain; horse whips and small canes were used on them under five years old in such a manner as to render them for many days after scarce able to move, and this sometimes only on a suspicion of trifling faults, which they had not really committed; as they grew older they were punish'd with still more barbarity, by buckling their arms behind them with leather straps as tight as they could be drawn without dislocating the joints, and then cramming them into a dark hole where they were lock'd up often many hours,

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and sometimes a whole day together without receiving any sustenance, or having the poor relief of room enough to shift their posture ; when taken out their arms for a time were useless, and the blood fix'd in spots from the shoulders to the fingers ends. Stupified with pain, and confused by the sudden glare of light, they stagger'd and appear'd senseless, for this they were again beaten, and the blows repeated 'till they stood still and gave answers to the questions ask'd : If their mother but attempted an intercession, she was turn'd out of the room, and the children's punishment encreased.

The young lady who now lay dead was his eldest daughter, a favourite child, who, while attempting to excuse

cause a trifling fault in her brother, he threw from him with such violence, that her head striking against the corner of a marble slab, it fractured her skull and laid her breathless at his feet.

Horses and dogs he generally treated with more kindness than his children, but those sometimes experienced the effects of passion, and the sallies of wanton cruelty. As these scenes were passing before me, I was particularly shocked by two instances, where the barbarity of the man seemed heightened by the apparent affection that the creatures were at that instant expressing towards him.— A pointing bitch having unfortunately disturbed him by barking in the night, he loaded a pistol when he rose,

role, and called her to him in the garden ; she came, obedient to the call, with pleasure and security, and fondly leap'd against him, while in return for all the signs of love she had power to shew, her brains were in a moment scattered on the ground. It gave me pleasure to observe that the destruction of this innocent animal afterwards cost him more tears than he ever shed on any other occasion, owing to the accidental death of her puppies, by which a breed he greatly valued was irretrievably gone ; it was this loss he lamented, and not the cruelty of his own temper, which remained the same, and was afterwards exercised on a poor hound that he suspected of having sometimes disturbed the game, and who belonged to

to a neighbour ; accidentally seeing this dog trot over a field alone in his way home, he hollow'd to him ; the animal knowing the voice, ran instantly and fawned upon the barbarous hand which twisted back his neck, and cut his throat ; in this condition the poor creature was found some days after in an adjacent wood ; it was never known by whom he was killed, but the suspicion fell on him, as the only person in the country that was thought capable of such an action, and happy indeed is it that few men are ! — I must not dwell longer on particular incidents — let it suffice in general to say, that his character appeared to be a complication of vices, without a single good quality to weigh against them. He had a mixture of extreme pride,

pride, and the most abject meanness of spirit, was fond of the lowest company, whom, after making drunk, he delighted in persuading to beat their wives, and sometimes, by this means, was the cause of much mischief. He hated to hear his servants cheerful, and as a double exercise of his ill-nature would often make his wife go to forbid their innocent diversions, which was as disagreeable to her, who loved to see her domestics happy, as it could be to them; and that this might not appear to be by his order, he would immediately follow, and express the warmest displeasure at her interrupting their mirth, with a specious appearance of good-humour, that often passed for good-nature, of which he had not a grain in his composition.

position.—These little anecdotes are sufficient to give you a thorough knowledge of his character.

Such was the man 'till the fatal accident to his daughter, we have seen the effects produced by that, and must now hasten to a conclusion of the story. By the timely support of those good beings, who had advanced to his assistance, on observing the *sincerity* of his repentance, his mind became a little more calm, he rose from the ground with more composure, but not less dejection.

At this time a court of justice was sitting, which passed sentence on all criminal cases; from this court officers were dispatched to require his

appearance: He obeyed the mandate. The guardians of his children, convinced of the total change in his sentiments, which produced an abhorrence of vice, and disposed his mind to receive every good impression, summoned one of their own order to attend him, who, by gleams of hope, sustained his sinking soul, while the awful presence of so unexpected a guard, kept off his late companions, that would fain have built despair upon the horrors of conscious guilt, but trembling at a near approach to virtue, dared not advance to second their fruitless wishes. The cause was heard, his daughter's death attributed to accident, and himself acquitted.

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When he return'd, after venting the anguish of his heart over the dead body, he call'd the rest of his children together, express'd the deepest concern for the bad example his corrupted manners had set them; did ample justice to the character of their injured mother, and declared his resolution to make all the reparation to her, and them, that was yet in his power. This, in a view we took of him, some days after, I saw he had done in the most public manner. He appear'd no longer in any respect the same man, every sentiment seem'd to have a different cast, nor could I have thought it possible for so thorough a change to have been work'd in so short a time. The malignant beings, mortified at such an unexpected disap-

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pointment, after venting their spleen in mutual reproaches and unavailing imprecations, departed in search of scenes more suited to their inclination, one of their number only remain'd in hopes of regaining his former influence when the violence of grief for the fatal accident should subside ; I cannot say but that I was myself apprehensive that this might be possible, notwithstanding the present appearance of perfect sincerity, 'till my instructor taught me to distinguish the impressions that time would efface, from those that must naturally be increased by it ; of the first kind were such as proceeded either from the chagrin arising from disappointed hopes, or the terror occasion'd by the apprehension of impending evils ; these,

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he inform'd me, produced nearly the same effect ; such a conviction of the uncertainty of all sublunary enjoyments as enforced the necessity of founding the hope of happiness on a more permanent basis ; in consequence of which the libertine was in a moment transformed to a devotee, and would spend whole days upon his knees, either to implore forgiveness, or deprecate the punishment he fear'd ; but this being merely an operation of the passions, in which reason has no part, when the sourness of disappointment wears off, or the apprehended danger is removed, the man returns to his former state, and is often the first to ridicule the folly of his late fears.

The case of the man before you, said my guardian, is of a different sort, you observed that grief for his daughter's death took but a secondary place in his mind, the first was wholly occupied by a painful contemplation on his own conduct, and so just a sense of his crimes as to raise abhorrence at the thought: Hitherto his will has been his only law, and this is the first hour of serious examination he has ever known; the result of which is a thorough conviction of the detestable deformity of vice, and a sincere contrition for having been so long it's votary, this is not the effect of fear, but wholly of reason suddenly call'd to it's long deserted throne by the fatal consequence of indulged passion. Virtue, real virtue now dawns on his enlighten'd

lighten'd mind, as yet he but confusedly sees her distant charms, but these will every day grow more conspicuous to him, and effectually secure his heart from a return to vice. So strong is his conviction, so firm his resolution, that there is no room to doubt his becoming eminently good, but the sense of his past crimes, and the irreparable consequences of them, will give a peculiar gravity to his manner, and render him, while upon earth, incapable of enjoying that pleasure, which is the natural result of the practice of virtue in a heart unstain'd with vices of so deep a die; but perfect happiness beyond the grave awaits his perseverance.

In the course of our farther examinations I had several opportunities of observing the difference here pointed out to me, and learnt to distinguish accurately the transient effects of disappointment or fear, from the lasting impression made by such an awaken'd sense of guilt as produced a total change in the sentiments and disposition of the man, notwithstanding the first appearances were so exactly similar as to be easily mistaken for each other.

These particular relations will lead me too far, and I must content myself at present with giving you a more general account, as I know you will not be satisfied without hearing the conclusion of my own adventure, which, however briefly comprised will swell

swell this packet to an unusual size :
Some other time I may, perhaps, entertain you with several of the secret histories my mirror presented to me —of patriots who, void of every honest feeling that ought to dignify so great a character, plume themselves upon the mistaken, and unsteady clamours of fools, and knaves—ministers whose views tend more to raise a fortune for themselves, and those connected with them, than a deserved good name, the only mark by which they ought to be distinguish'd ; and Prelates who worship every power but *That* to whose service they are principally called, and whose mask serves only to shew their deformity in a more conspicuous light to the wise—
but shall now confine myself to the

most useful part of the knowledge I have acquired, and hasten to inform you in what manner I became again upon an equal foot with the rest of mankind, by the loss of those extensive powers, that, for a while, were lent me.

Upon the whole, the result of my observations was a thorough conviction that the general opinion of an unequal distribution of good, and happiness amongst mankind was ill grounded, and had taken it's rise from a partial judgment founded on appearances only, which was at once refuted by a thorough knowledge of all that pass'd in the breast of each individual from the Monarch to the peasant. Our views were not confin'd to

to the kingdom of Portugal, but, we transported ourselves with the utmost rapidity and ease over the whole globe ; and in visiting all the nations of the world found, on a close inspection of the heart, that however different the proportions of power, riches, and honours amongst men, that of happiness in every situation, in every climate was exactly the same, as far as it depended on outward circumstances. The poorer sort, whose daily sustenance must be the product of their daily labour, found all the cares of life confined to the narrow circle of it's support, and felt, in the acquisition of bare necessaries, all the enjoyment that the pleasures of sense could bestow. The mechanic and artificer formed their growing works with care and

and anxiety, not inferior to that of the statesman or general planning a mode of government, or regulating the operations of a campaign ; and success or disappointment produced exactly the same effects on the minds of each. Those unengaged in state affairs, unoccupied by trade, whose independent fortunes seemed to place them in the most tranquil state of human life, either as husbands, fathers, or in their connections of other kinds, felt with equal strength the pain of disappointed expectations, and abortive schemes, and the pleasures of flattering prospects, and successful pursuits. In short, where there were no real distresses, imaginary ills supplied their place, and I was convinced to a demonstration, that there was not the least

least degree of difference in the proportion of happiness enjoyed, or misery sustained, from the different situations, either in rank or fortune, in this world. The Monarch's breast was neither more exempt from, or more loaded with cares than those of his subjects; neither were his enjoyments superior. Amongst these, one particularly attracted my attention; the retrospect was the most perfect my mirror had presented; his soul was replete with every noble and generous sentiment; virtue was it's native soil improved by study and unwearyed application; he was blessed by the affectionate tenderness of an amiable Consort worthy of himself; in whom a dignity of manner that commanded respect, and a strength

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of mind equal to the task of governing a kingdom were united to a sweet complacency of temper, and an affability so becoming and well adapted as to win the hearts of all who approached her. Their example was a perfect pattern of conjugal felicity, and a promising offspring encreased their domestic joys. Notwithstanding this Monarch was in private life the best of husbands and of fathers, I observed that the good and happiness of his people were the principal objects of his care; to be beloved by them, and feared by his neighbours, his only ambition: For these laudable ends he formed the wisest plans, and would have chosen the fittest ministers, but jealousy, envy, and discord amongst the nobles, disconcerted

ed every scheme, drove from the helm the honest hands and ablest heads, and introduced a general confusion: With the anguish of a father, he beheld his subjects injured by the interruption of public business, from the capricious resignation of offices, accepted but with the contracted view of private interest, and thrown up on private pique, or disappointed pride. He esteemed the liberty of his subjects the brightest jewel of his crown, and gloried in reigning over a free people; but saw with grief that liberty too oft degenerates into licentiousness. He penetrated the views, and observed with proper resentment the steps of those, who, by seditious papers, or plausible harangues, laboured to disturb the repose of his kingdom,

dom, but pitied the deluded mob, who, misled by the artifice of their superiors, loaded with scurrility the supporters of their true interest, and dignified with loud applause the men, and measures, that threatened their destruction.

After having some time silently admired the uncommon virtues of this excellent Monarch, and lamented the infatuation of his people, I asked if it would not be better for a prince, who knew so well the duty of a sovereign, and the interest of his kingdom, to exert with full force the royal prerogative in the disposal of places, direction of measures, and suppression of faction. Were you better acquainted, said my conductor, with the history of

of this people, it would explain the conduct of their King, and encrease your love and admiration of him. They are a warlike and a commercial nation ; their trade is extended to every quarter of the globe, and every neighbouring power has felt the terror of their arms. Arts and sciences flourish amongst them ; unanimity alone is wanting to make them masters of the world ; but haughty and turbulent in their dispositions, they are always at variance with each other, and forming parties that maintain with virulence a continual opposition ; when attacked by a foreign force, they suspend a while these animosities, and unite to repel the foe, but e'er the conquest is compleat, jealous of each other's success, party feuds

feuds again revive to oppose the minister's measures, or cramp the general's hands, 'till a peace is of necessity concluded, when they have usually lost by treaty all they had gained by force of arms.

The Prince you are observing having early studied the genius of his people, and made himself perfectly acquainted with the true interest of his kingdom, was convinced that concord only was necessary to raise both their glory and happiness to the highest pitch, and therefore determined, on his accession to the throne, to make a point of abolishing, if possible, the name of party, and of uniting his subjects by the band of mutual interest, as the children of one common father,

father, whose strength and felicity rested on the same basis, and must increase or diminish in proportion to the unanimity, or opposition of measures.

Perfectly acquainted with human nature, he foresaw the difficulty of overcoming long-rooted prejudices, and for this reason proceeded with the gentlest hand; not only bore with patience ungrateful and repeated opposition to the schemes he had wisely planned for public good; but even tenderly with-held the punishment that insolence deserved. Even yet you see he steadily pursues the same paternal course, and proves himself, in every sense, the affectionate father of his people: See how he aims to regulate the manners of his court by the

faultless example of his own private life, and see what sorrow rends his regal bosom, at every proof of their immoral characters, and dissolute conduct.

I am not permitted to disclose the secrets of futurity, by telling you whether success will at length crown this excellent Monarch's endeavours; or what will be the fate of a people so blind to their own interest, and so unworthy of the benefits conferred on them; but may inform you that the alternative of good or ill, of glory or disgrace, is now at their own option; and more, that this is the last æra wherein it will be so; should their incorrigible obstinacy at length determine their Sovereign to renounce all hope

hope of bringing them to a sense of their duty and interest, and force him to exert the royal prerogative in the full execution of that power the constitution has wisely entrusted in his hands, he will at once discharge from every office all those restless and envious spirits who embroil the affairs of state, by endeavouring to regulate public measures by their private attachments and secret animosities; and fill every post with men of disinterested integrity, equally and invariably attached to the liberty of the subject, the interest of the kingdom, and the rights of the crown; should the Monarch ever find it necessary to form this resolution, he will then be as steady and severe toward the offenders, as he is now easy and compassionate;

and they too late repent their guilt, when they feel it's deserved punishment: Of these, should any irritated by the just disgrace entailed upon themselves attempt to blow up faction into rebellion, they will have the mortification to find that a good King ever reigns in the hearts of his subjects; and that whatever transient impressions the arts of designing men may, on particular occasions, have made on their minds, they are too sensible of their own happiness under his government, not to defend his person, and support his rights with their utmost power against every invader. But tho' rebellious schemes will prove abortive, and serve only to involve in ruin the projectors, yet the continuance of divided interests, the
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pursuit of private views, inconsistent with the public weal, and the opposition of discontented parties to all the measures even of the wisest administration, must in time totally extinguish the glory of the kingdom. If they persist in this infatuation, not another century will elapse before this once dreaded nation shall become the contempt and scoff of all those foreign powers that so oft have trembled at its name, and sink from thence into total oblivion. On the contrary, should they in time become sensible of their true interest, suppress the spirit of faction, extinguish the name of party, and unanimously join to support their Monarch's views, which are centered wholly in the public good, before the present generation has passed away,

their nation shall arrive at a pitch of glory superior to all former ages, and give laws to half the globe. Which of these alternatives will be chosen, is wrapt in the womb of time. Now is the crisis of their fate, for should this favourable opportunity be lost, no second chance will be allowed, and sure destruction waits their folly ; in which, however the King will not be involved, as the catastrophe shall not happen in his days ; his sufferings will be only those of an afflicted father for the faults of his children, of which he too plainly foresees the fatal consequences ; but the guardian of his safety will support his mind with every proper consolation ; whilst his constant attention to every dictate, every admonition of this protecting power, ensures

sures the rectitude of his own conduct, and secures the serenity of his mind. Safe under the vigilance of this invisible guard, he shall rise superior to all the efforts of vice and faction, disappoint the designs, and trample upon necks of his enemies.

and his course of life should be clear.

I have given you this general sketch, continued my instructor, of the situation of affairs in the kingdom before you, that I might not leave you uncertain as to the fortune of a Prince whose virtues have so justly interested you in his welfare.

My peculiar commission is now ended, you have had all the information that it is fit, or can be useful for you to receive. The whole system

of the planet you inhabit has been laid open to your view; the doubts that have so long perplexed your honest breast, with regard to the situation and conduct of mankind, and the apparently unequal dispensations of our great Creator in this part of his rational creation, are now compleatly satisfied; and by inspecting the hearts of men in every rank of life, you are convinced to a demonstration, that the degree of happiness to each individual is exactly proportioned to the degree of virtue, and wholly independent on all outward circumstances. You have seen that the ignorance, the weakness, and imperfections of human nature are all assisted and supplied by our incessant care; that in spight of ten thousand neglected admonitions we attend

attend our charge with unwearied diligence, nor are ever driven from our post but by such incorrigible vice as leaves no glimmering hope of reformation. Your religious scruples are effectually removed; the jumble of inconsistencies that has often stagger'd your belief of christianity, you find to be only the inventions of designing, or the enthusiastic imaginations of weak men, fostered on the most perfect system of morality that ever appear'd amongst them. Go now, Alphonso, fulfil what yet remains of your probationary state; shew by your own example what ought to be a christian's life; but be slow and cautious in the declaration of the truths that have been communicated to you: Of all

human

human ills the prejudices of education are the greatest ; remember these are never to be overcome by storm, but may with ease be undermined ; prepare by gentle steps the minds of your contemporaries for the reception of the knowledge you have gain'd, and fear not then to point out all those errors, either in the modes of faith, or rules of practice, that being unhappily supported by the sanction of authority have acquired additional strength to mislead the minds of men : Of these every nation we have visited has afforded you some examples, and also of a set of men who from interested views, or early prejudices are tenacious of maintaining them ; from such expect all the opposition that can be made ; but let not this discourage you,

you, go on with prudence and perseverance, and success shall in the end crown your endeavours to restore to the world that pure system of christianity which your own enlighten'd observations have convinced you does not now exist in any of the different sects that have usurp'd the name of christians.

We were now passing over the top of a mountain inaccessible to men, which appear'd from the bottom to be a barren soil cover'd with eternal snow ; but not far beneath the summit we perceived a spacious plain interspersed with little groves of fruit-trees, of various kinds, none of which I had ever before seen ; here my companion order'd me to stop, and gather

a large bough that bent beneath the weight of its full ripen'd load ; from hence we proceeded directly to Lisbon and again descended that chasm where my good genius had at first become visible to me, and had restor'd my decay'd strength by that cælestia light which had been ever since my support.

The place, since our departure, was so much alter'd by repeated motions of the earth, that I should not have known it for the same but by the information of my guide ; the opening was now so large on the top, that though the chasm was extremely deep so strong a light descended from above that I could clearly perceive on one side the ruins of my house, the upper part of which only seem'd to be fallen in, and that rather by the weight and pressure

pressure of the closing earth over the roof, than by the shock of it's descent. I have brought you to this place, said my conductor, that you may know by ascending from it, in a natural method, the direct road to the recovery of your effects, which from the top could not with any certainty be discover'd, the greatest part of them will be found uninjured. Observe the cavity on your right hand, pass through that and pursue the winding path at the end of it, which will lead you to the city ; 'tis a long and steep ascent, and it is necessary for you to take some rest before you attempt it ; now eat of the fruit you brought from the mountain, the effects of that material food will soon render me invisible to you, but be assured that though unseen I

shall

shall be always near you, ever attentive to my charge, and ready to give all the assistance you can have occasion for; and that your constant regard to my admonitions will effectually secure you from all real evil.

After expressing the warmest gratitude of my heart, I obey'd the orders of my kind protector, by eating of the fruit I had gather'd, every time it was pluck'd, a thin liquor issued from the bough, so plentifully as to afford me a small draught, this liquor had the appearance of water, but was more agreeable and refreshing than wine; the taste of the fruit was exquisit. I eat and drank heartily—An uncommon drowsiness overcame me while I was eating, and I fell asleep with the fruit in

in my hand; how long this sleep continued I know not, but believe it was a considerable time, because the leaves on my bough were much wither'd when I awaked. My eyes were no sooner open than I look'd round for my guardian, but saw him no more; neither had I now any power of suspending myself in air, and might perhaps have suspected the whole, since my first descending into the chasm, to be nothing more than a dream, had not the different appearance of the place, and the remainder of the fruit I had brought from the mountain undeniably convinced me of it's reality; to which the cavity in the ground on my right hand, that had been pointed out to me as the direct path to the city,

city, would have been a corroborating testimony had any been wanting.

I now recapitulated in my own mind all that had happen'd to me since my departure from Lisbon on the first day of the earthquake, that every circumstance might be more strongly imprinted on my memory. My heart overflow'd with gratitude at the recollection of the peculiar favour I had experienc'd and offer'd up, with all the warmth of pure devotion, the just tribute of unfeigned thanks to the great Parent of the universe, who in so extraordinary a manner had permitted my various doubts to be effectually clear'd up by a full explanation of the rectitude and kindness of all his dispensations. I was now perfectly content

content with my own situation ; neither regretted the loss of the powers lately enjoy'd, or lamented my separation from Artimissa, but contemplated with inexpressible satisfaction that state of uninterrupted felicity to which she was removed, and felt all the pleasure that a certain prospect of one day partaking it with her could afford.

The sleep I had lately awaked from I believed to be equally supernatural with those extraordinary powers that had for a time been lent me, and not owing to any peculiarly soporific quality in the fruit I had eaten ; and therefore renew'd my repast without any apprehension of the like consequence. My mirror then occur'd to my thoughts, I search'd every where

in vain for it, and at length concluded that it might probably be as immaterial as my guardian angel, and consequently was equally invisible to me in my present state, besides I soon recollect that the possession of it could be of no use to me, as my faculties were not now able to comprehend any thing in so rapid a succession as this had presented events to me.

Before I quitted the chasm, I carefully examin'd the state of the edifice, to consider by what method my effects might be the most easily come at; and having finish'd my observations, cheerfully enter'd the cavity, perfectly happy in the certainty of the continued presence of my invisible protector.

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This cavity led me to another opening more spacious than the former, where I discover'd the track that had been described to me ; the ascent was steep, but the winding direction made it more easy ; I reach'd the surface before sun setting, without meeting with any incident worth relating, and went to my friend Don Sebastian, who received me with as much joy and astonishment as a restoration from the dead could have imparted ; having concluded I had perish'd in the general calamity.

My adventures appear'd so marvelous to Sebastian, tho' I communicated only part of them to him, that he advised me to lock the secret in my own breast, 'till the recovery of

my effects might vouch the truth of a story, that would otherwise be taken for the result of a distemper'd imagination occasion'd by my misfortunes : I follow'd his advice, answer'd in general to all enquiries that I had miraculously escaped the fate of my family, and made the necessary preparation for descending to my subterraneous repository ; my friend readily gave me all the assistance in his power, tho' he afterwards confess'd that, notwithstanding the reasonable manner in which I conversed on every other subject, he had some doubt of the soundness of my intellects on this head.

All things succeeded to my expectation; we descended with ease, and I

had

had scarcely recover'd the most valuable part of my stores, before we were alarm'd by a few slight shocks of the earth, from which happily no bad consequences ensued ; but I was extremely surprized to find the next morning that, slight as they were, they had made a total change in the position of the ground where I had descended ; the whole chasm was filled up, nor could any of us again discover the same spot ; this prevented the execution of a scheme I had formed for recovering the bodies of Artimissa and my children, to deposit them in a vault where mine might in time be added to the number ; I must now content myself with erecting a monument to their memory, which shall record the manner of their death, and attempt to

convey a faint idea of the virtues of my beloved wife: Having now no family, I resolved not to incumber myself with business, sold off my whole stock at once, and have been ever since employ'd in compiling a circumstantial history of all that was discover'd to me, which is not yet finish'd; when the whole is thrown regularly together, I shall from time to time select such parts as, on particular occasions, may be found useful to communicate to the world; and in this shall be guided by the admonitions of my invisible monitor.

I must now bid you farewell, and shall only add my warmest wishes for your perfect happiness, to which nothing will so effectually conduce as such

such a firm belief of the truths contain'd in this letter as will make you constantly attentive to the dictates of the benevolent Being, who has the charge of your safety : Your own observation, my dear brother, will soon convince you of the advantages accruing from such an attention ; for I doubt not your giving full credit to my assertion, or of the consequent encrease of your felicity, which will afford the sincerest pleasure to

Your affectionate

Alphonso.

Q 4 L E T

LETTER VII.

To Mrs. G—.

Dear Madam,

THE disappointment of those pleasing hopes I had indulged of our passing a few weeks most agreeably together is no trifling mortification to me ; yet I can very sincerely congratulate you on the cause, and share your happiness at the unexpected arrival of Mr. G— and the Captain, from whom you may now hear with pleasure a description of that dangerous expedition, which so late made you tremble for the life of two persons so justly dear to you. Long may you all uninterruptedly enjoy the felicity your virtues so well deserve, a felicity of which you now express so lively a sense, that we may justly

justly rank you in the most happy class of human beings. I may possibly make you a day's visit at my return, in the mean time am rejoic'd that your present engagements will suspend your impatience during the necessary cessation of our historical correspondence.

You will not now expect me to answer your questions more fully than to tell you in general, that my friend's marriage was not kept secret above half the time intended, and this owing to some very odd circumstances in Mr. P—'s behaviour during their separation, which gave her but too much reason to fear she had been unfortunately deceived in her opinion of him—The particulars I must not at present enter into; suffice it only

visitui

to

to say, that in consequence of the declaration of their marriage they soon after lived together, and by the direction of their fathers were publickly re-married. From the gay ratling girl, she now at once became the grave and prudent woman, and I may, without partiality, say made an excellent wife, studying the inclination of her husband, which was the sole guide of her actions. So great was her conformity, that upon his only throwing out a hint that it would be more prudent in married women not to dance, because no man liked to see his wife give her hand to another on any occasion, she immediately left off a diversion she was very fond of, and never after, while they lived on tolerable terms together, suffered any man,

man, when it could possibly be avoided with decency, even to hand her to her chair. This instance will give you a notion of her general conduct towards him, which was all of a piece, and perhaps to her constant compliance with all his humours, however unreasonable, the ruin of his temper might in great measure be owing—

But no more of this subject at present.

I am experimentally convinced of the utility of the doctor's injunctions, and find myself much better for having pass'd three days in a variety of trifling amusements, chiefly in the flower garden, without having seen either a pen and ink, or book. I shall set out to-morrow on my journey, and by idling away a few weeks

in

in this insignificant manner, I hope to lay in a sufficient stock of health to go through the remainder of my task; and to say truth, I find that a good share will be necessary to bear the dwelling upon, and methodizing a series of melancholy events, which can never be recollected without some degree of that painful impression they once stamp'd upon the mind with too much force ever to be totally effaced.

It might perhaps be as well to defer the sequel 'till we meet in town, as a verbal relation will be more easy and take much less time, but should the improvement of my health permit my proceeding, I shall not put your patience to so long a trial—What may happen some weeks hence I have not, thank

thank God, prescience enough to determine—Assure Mr. G— and the Captain of my best wishes, and most affectionate regards,—You may depend on my compliance with your obliging request by observing most strictly the rules prescribed while at Scarborough, that it may not be my own fault should I bring back as useless a head as I carry with me, for such, I am sure, it may justly be call'd, when it refuses to second my inclination to gratify the wish of one so inestimably dear as you will ever

be to

Your

most affectionate friend.

The E N D.

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ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 31, Line 8, for The, read it's motion
P. 34, last l. for recommended, read recommending
P. 57, l. 10, for unison, read union of sounds
P. 73, l. 16, for exerised, read exercised
P. 100, l. 8, for whether, read whither
P. 179, l. 12, for possibility, read impossibility.

VOL. II.

P. 4, l. 1, for bears, read bares
P. 76, last l. for equanimity, read equability of
temper
P. 93, l. 7, for dozes, read doses
P. 122, l. 4, for themselves, read himself
P. 165, l. 4, for portion, read powder
P. 191, l. 9, for age, read youth

VOL. III.

P. 147, l. 8, for this purpose, read these purposes
P. 171, l. 9, for dewey, read dewy
P. 172, l. 16, for we, read me

VOL. IV.

P. 10, l. 2, for mischief, read mischiefs
P. 14, l. 11, for drop, read drop'd
P. 34, 114, 119, 125, for mirrour read mirror
P. 38, l. 12, for his, read the creditors
P. 54, l. 2, for anacquainted, read unacquainted
P. 54, l. 5, for uneerstanding, read understanding
P. 107, l. 10, for make, read makes
P. 130, l. 3, for actions, read actors

END.